

Wild Tension

by [AngellicHuntress](#)

Chapter 1: Not Quite Secure

"Miss Cliff! If you want to make your carefree charm work you have to loosen up yourself!"

"Sorry Mrs. Baker."

"You students sure give us teachers a headache!"

"Sorry!"

"No matter. It's about time for dinner anyway. Class dismissed."

Helen Cliff grabbed her bag and hurried out the door. A short blond was laughing hysterically.

"I don't see what was so amusing, Bianca." Helen said in a colder voice than she meant it. "No need to get in such a huff! It's just funny how tense you get whenever Kevin looks at you."

"I just wasn't expecting him to come walking in our class."

"Your expression was priceless! A real Kodak moment!"

"A what?"

"That means it's hilarious."

"I repeat...I don't see what's so funny."

"Hey Helen!" someone called. Helen spun around and stood face to face with none other than Kevin.

"Speak of the devil!" Bianca grinned. Helen glared at her.

"Ummmm I was wondering if...well...er." Kevin mumbled.

"What is it?" Helen thought. "Just keep your cool...don't look into those misty blue eyes...."

"We have the weekend trip to Carna off and I was wondering if...if you wanted ...to...spend it together..."

Helen looked up into his eyes and silently cursed herself. She KNEW she'd freeze if she looked at him and she did.

"Uh..." she blustered. "Ummm"

Bianca's bursts of laughter brought Helen back to earth.

"Of course I'd like to."

"Great! I'll see you at Geoffrey's Cream Shop." Kevin said with a smile that left Helen breathless.

"Yeah...."

Helen didn't know how long she stood there but it must have been a while because Bianca stopped laughing.

"My God, Helen! Snap out of it!"

"Oh!" Helen blushed. "Whoops."

"Whoops? I'll be surprised if we make it to the Dining Hall for dessert! Hurry up!"

The two ran through the double doors just in time to see the teachers arriving. Bianca grabbed her shoulder and led her to their table, where they sat down next to Harvey and Sabrina.

"What took you two so long?" Harvey asked.

"Ummm..well...Kevin-"

"AH!" Sabrina screamed. She jumped up and hugged Helen.

"What the-"

"He'd been talking about asking forever! I didn't think he'd have the guts to-"

"WHAT!" Helen shouted, dropping her fork with a clatter. A few people down the table turned to stare at her. "What! Why didn't you tell me he talked to you about this?"

"He swore me to secrecy."

"Augh, fine."

"Well anyway-"

She was cut off. The huge doors Bianca and Helen had walked through moments before were blasted open. A few people screamed while the others and their teachers reached for their own wands. Seven people, dressed in black, with wands pointing

straight ahead crossed over the threshold. One of them, the shortest, led them straight toward the teachers. The teachers started shouting assortments of spells and the trespassers, instead of attacking at the teachers, started shooting at the students. Everyone jumped out of their seats and were running toward the side doors but a loud voice boomed....

"DON'T ANYONE MOVE UNLESS YOU ALL WISH TO DIE!"

Everyone stopped where they were.

"What do you want?" Principal Spritz shouted.

"Talk. Outside."

"Why should I?"

One of the hooded people grabbed a student and held a wand to their head, about to whisper an unforgivable curse.

"Alright! Alright!"

Spritz followed the short man out the door. Bianca had Helen's arm in a death grip.

"Omg! Omg! Omg! They're going to kill us!"

"How come we can't take them? There are eight hundred of us and six of them!"

"They don't want any students to die." Helen whispered.

The dreary silence was disturbed when blue sparks sailed through the air above them. At that moment two things Helen least expected actually happened. One, the Principal of Salem Institute fell through the door, obviously dead. Two, Mrs. Baker and the other teachers started firing at the intruders and Kevin came running towards her, grabbed her around the waist, lifted her onto his shoulder, and started running through the back door, with Mrs. Baker at his heels.

"What is going on?" Helen shouted.

"No time to explain" Mrs. Baker spoke briskly. "Kevin, you know what to do."

The door opened again and Mrs. Baker turned to head off whoever had opened it. Kevin pulled her along quickly.

"What- is- going-on?" Helen asked between breaths.

"You're in trouble."

"I can see that now! WHY though?"

"This way..." Kevin steered her to the left. "Dumbledore-

"What does Alby have to do with anything?"

"He knew this would happen. Every Top Senior has been preparing for this since you came here."

"And that is-"

"For You-know-who to send his followers after you."

"What would they want with m-"

"Shhh." Kevin hissed. They stopped for a few seconds and then continued running.

"And how come I wasn't notified about this?" Helen demanded.

"Albus's orders."

"Okay he's been telling the magical world for a year that Vol...that you-know-who is back and coming after Harry Potter but he doesn't have the time to tell me I'm in danger?"

"Come on. One of the teachers must have warned Professor Dumbledore by now. The only thing left to do is get you out of Salem Institute."

"And how exactly do you plan to do that?"

"I'm top senior remember? I've been t-" Kevin stopped suddenly and Helen smacked into him. It became evident pretty quickly why he stopped.

"*Expelliarmus*" Kevin and Helen shouted.

"Stupefy" said three voices. Kevin fell to the ground.

"KEVIN!"

"Grab the girl!"

"AHHHHHHH LEMME GO!"

"Shut her up!"

"LET GO!" Helen gave her captor a blow to the head and the chest.

"Help!" he yelped.

And as almost all kidnapping stories go...the person kidnapped got knocked unconscious.

Chapter 2: Stillness

A forceful prod to the back woke Helen. She looked around the room fearfully, first at the fireplace and then at the three wizards and a witch sitting across from her; staring.

"Why can't we have a bit o' fun with her?"

"The Dark Lord warned us that she wasn't to have a single scratch until he gets here."

"I know some spells that don't leave any marks."

"Drop it, moron. He knows when you've disobeyed. He knows when you've wanted to disobey so shut your fat lip up."

It was obvious the three wizards were American but the woman proved to be British when she finally spoke. "Sure this is her?"

"Yes."

"She's not what I expected but I guess she doesn't have that much in her."

"I guess not."

"Silence." The woman walked slowly up to her. "You ARE Helia-su-tamen Cliff."

"No. I don't know wh-"

"Don't lie to me Helen."

"I'm not lying. Have you ever seen a more innocent face?"

"I enjoy killing the innocent so if I were you I'd watch what I was saying. Where is the amulet?"

"The what?"

"THE AMULET YOU IDIOT!"

"I don't-"

"DO NOT TEMPT ME!"

Helen went quiet. She'd never dealt with dark wizards and witches before but she could tell when actually being truthful wasn't working. She didn't have any amulets and she wondered why they thought she might have one.

"We can kill you now." The woman said with an evil smile.

"Craptacular." Helen thought. "This was NOT how I planned. I have to change the subject..."

"Does anyone have Veritaserum?" asked the woman

"I'm afraid not." said a long haired wizard.

"Alright. Enough wasted time. Any last words before you die?"

"Think! Think!" Helen's brain said. Too bad it couldn't think of what to think.

"You can't kill me! You-know-who said not to!" Helen yelled.

"Ah," the woman said with a malicious smile. "He said these fools (indicating to the wizards) couldn't but he never told me anything."

"Cripes."

"Colloportus"

Helen and her chair rocketed through the air and smashed into the wall. Hard. She cried out in pain but couldn't move. The chair broke into smaller pieces and was digging into her lower back and the collision with the wall left her lightheaded as blood trickled down the back of her head.

"Aren't I supposed to pass out right now?" Helen wondered angrily. "Augh I WISH I could pass out or fall asleep...whichever comes sooner." she tried to move (since her invisible bonds had broken along with the chair) but couldn't summon up enough energy. Out of the corner of Helen's eyes she could see something speeding fast toward the window. BANG! It cracked open and the wildest looking group of wizards Helen had ever seen came flying through it. Helen gaped until one of them, the only woman, grabbed her by the hand and led her towards the window.

"We've got to jump!" She shouted, trying to help Helen up.

"OUCH!" Helen screamed and stopped trying to move. "I can't."

"Mobilicorpus" said the witch. "I'm going to let you hover out the window until I can lower you down."

That's when Helen realized as she was pulled into the air by invisible strings and floating outside, but...

"Omg! My wand! They still have my wand!" Helen screamed. One of the taller wizards seemed to be having a harder time with the woman who injured Helen. After the three bad wizards were stunned the good ones pointed their wands at her and in union shouted "Stupefy". One of them reached into her pocket and pulled out Helen's wand.

"This yours?"

"Yes."

He threw it at the girl holding Helen in the air with her wand, who also used both hands to catch it and in doing so there was nothing keeping Helen from falling and she landed in a bush that luckily didn't have many thorns.

"OUCH" Helen shouted from below. A moment later her four rescuers were helping her up and dragging her towards some brooms lying on the ground.

"You fly?"

"Quod Team Captain!" Helen said trying to sound brightly but was too at loss for breath. She could tell three of them were frowning in the dark. "But I'm reserve keeper for Quidditch." Helen added. This news scored more points. "I don't think I can fly though. I can barely move on my own."

"We don't have much time and we have to get a good head start before we get attacked by a whole group of Death Eaters!" growled a frighteningly scary looking wizard with one huge wild eye.

"Kingsley...you pick her up and fly on the broom with her." said the girl...Helen just noticed she had violet hair...talking to the wizard that struggled with the bad witch.

"Well then let me borrow your double seat broom Tonks."

"Alright then."

"She acquired quite a blow to the head, Moody." a young wizard but with graying hair spoke loudly as Kingsley was helping Helen on the broom. "Should we heal it now?"

"No time."

The man seemed not to have heard and gave her head a light tap and the blood stopped, even though the pain still throbbed.

"That's as best as I could do under the circumstances." he apologized.

Helen was about to thank him but Kingsley, Tonks, Moody, and the young wizard (and I mean in his thirties I'm guessing) all sped on their brooms into the night sky.

Chapter 3: Rendezvous with Luck

"OUCH!" Helen yelled and her eyes flew open. Moody had used a wakening charm that felt like sharp nails digging into her stomach.

"Read this and memorize it." he said.

Helen stared at a slip of parchment. "The-"

"Read it to yourself!" he hissed.

The headquarters of the Order of the Phoenix may be found at number twelve, Grimwald Place, London, England.

"That's Alby's-"

"No talking yet!" Moody muttered. Helen handed Moody back the parchment and stared at the beaten door, dirty windows, and filthy walls.

"This it?"

"Hurry! Hurry! Inside!"

It was then, before Helen fell back asleep that she noticed she was being carried and that was her last thought before darkness....

~*~

Molly Weasley rushed about the room trying to make last minute clean ups.

"Mum! There's no point in doing that." Fred said.

"Yeah because they'll find out soon enough that they're a lot of worse parts of the house than this." George explained.

"And a dirtier THING too." Fred muttered, obviously talking about Kreacher the old batty house-elf.

"Who do you reckon is this person the Order had to find?" Ron asked.

"And what could they have that the Death Eaters would want?" Ginny pondered.

"I don't know but it must have been something dangerous if they sent four of them." Hermione answered right away. "What do you think, Harry?"

Harry didn't answer. He was very thankful to be away from the Dursley's but this house brought back so many memories of Sirius not to mention the fact that Harry had to be constantly restrained from killing Kreacher.

"Harry?"

Harry didn't reply. The front door opened and everyone stared. First Mad-Eye Moody entered and following him was Kingsley Shacklebolt carrying an unconscious teenage girl with straight dark black hair, and at the rear were Nymphadora Tonks and Remus Lupin.

Mrs. Weasley let out a strangled cry. "What happened to her?"

"I'm guessing she gave answers they didn't want to hear. Should we wake her?"

"No! No! Let the poor dear sleep!"

"She was awake a minute ago. I'm sure it'll be alright."

"No! Questions can be saved for tomorrow!" Mrs. Weasley said very red in the face. At that moment Harry saw Helen was stirring awake.

The first thing he noticed was her eyes (very exotic looking). She gazed at everyone in the room with a look of apprehension. Mrs. Weasley crossed over to her and spoke kindly.

"Don't be frightened, dear. We..." Mrs. Weasley stopped as she looked at the dried blood on her hair.

"Oh my-we've got to-she's-"

Helen seemed to notice what Mrs. Weasley was talking about. "Oh! Mr. Umm...Mr. I don't know your name...."

"Lupin."

"Mr. Lupin stopped the bleeding. It's alright." Helen finished. Harry noticed her accent.

"I'll clean it for you though." said Mrs. Weasley, running her wand through Helen's hair. Kingsley walked over to the couch and sat her down next to Crookshanks, who curled instantly in her lap. Helen petted the cat while looking around at them again.

"Ummm." Helen began. "What happened?"

The door opened and closed emitting none other than Professor Dumbledore.

"Alby!" Helen shouted. The others looked around at each other. No one had ever called him "Alby" but he seemed to act like it was a perfectly natural name, as though he had been hearing it for years.

"Helen." he spoke regarding her. "Please tell us what happened."

Helen frowned as though expecting a friendlier welcome but started talking anyway.

*A/n: Yeah, this story switches point of view often.

"We were in the Dining Hall-"

"Huh." Ron said confused.

"Great Hall as you British would call it."

"Wait a second...you were in school? Why?"

"Americans start school late in August. I go to Salem Institute."

"Rea-"

"Shhhhh, Fred!" Mrs. Weasley shouted.

"I'll try making substitutions of words. Anyway...we were in the...Great Hall when suddenly these seven people wearing black hooded cloaks-"

"Were they British?"

"No. Only the girl."

"Bellatrix. Continue."

Harry froze. Bellatrix Lestrange was the witch who murdered Sirius. Bellatrix. Fury came over Harry unlike any he'd ever known. Hermione and Ron looked worriedly at him and back to Helen. Harry pulled away from his thoughts to try and listen to what she was saying.

"And then...Prin-Headmaster Spritz was killed."

"Are you sure of this?" Dumbledore asked warily.

"Killed or Stunned."

"Continue."

"So then suddenly Kevin-er-top senior...augh! Head Boy...came running over to me saying that YOU...(she glared at Dumbledore) had been preparing for this sort of thing to happen and couldn't find the time to let me know about it!" Helen said very upset.

"So Dumbledore had kept things from this girl too. Seems like he'd been keeping a lot of things from people." Harry thought with a touch of annoyance.

"We'll discuss that later." Dumbledore replied calmly. "What happened afterwards?"

"Then Kevin got Stunned and I got stunned and I found myself in this weird room. Hey how did you all find me anyway?" Helen asked.

"Unauthorized portkey. Carry on."

She seemed to be tired of "Carrying on" but she did anyway.

"She made a comment that I didn't have much of something in me. Then she asked if I was Helen. I said no. She asked if I had an...Amulet...and I said no. Then next thing I knew I was smashed into the wall and sprawled on the floor, head hammering with pain and wood digging into me." Helen concluded. "So would anyone mind telling me what these people want from me, why I wasn't told, and what I'm supposed to do about it?" she fired.

"Yes we mind." was all Dumbledore said before Disapparating. Helen stared open mouthed where he was standing a second before, clearly taken back that her questions were going to go unanswered. She looked around at the others, as if to ask them too but they all shook their heads and mumbled that they were just as clueless on this issue as she was and this didn't seem to cool Helen off one bit.

"Well!" piped Mr. Weasley. "I think some introductions are in order."

"Hello everyone my name is Helen hold-information-from-me Cliff." she said sarcastically.

"Her mood reminds me of you, Harry." Ron grinned.

"I know how she feels...what she's going through." Harry said quietly.

"On a serious note though...thanks for saving me." Helen whispered.

"I'll make you a nice cup of tea!" said Mrs. Weasley brightly. "Oh dear! Won't your parents be worried sick about you?"

Harry noticed an abrupt change in Helen's countenance.

"My parents died when I was nine." Helen spoke softly. Mrs. Weasley's face went pale and a few tears ran down her face.

"You too." she said and hugged her, though not tightly after remembering Helen's injuries.

Yes indeed. Harry knew exactly what she was going through.

Chapter 4: Mingle

"Should we wake her?" whispered a soft voice.

"She might get really mad. You know how Americans are."

"How ARE Americans?" Helen asked laughing. Ginny and Hermione had surprised expressions on their faces. They didn't know she'd been awake long before they opened her door.

"Oh, well..." Hermione said turning pink. "I just meant that-"

"No big deal." Helen grinned. "I'm Helen."

"I'm Ginny Weasley and this is Hermione Granger." Ginny announced as she and Hermione sat on the empty bed across from hers.

"I woke up before everyone else did. Professor McGonagall came by to drop off some of my things." she explained, pointing at her trunk. "And my letter." she pointed to an envelope on top of the trunk. "And Buster." she pointed to a tiny blue speckled bird on top of the wardrobe.

"Oh my gosh!" Ginny squealed. "It's a Jobberknoll! It's so cute! Where did you get him?"

"My guardian." Helen answered. "So why did you guys want to wake me?"

"Just thought we'd introduce ourselves seeing as we'll be spending today together until we go to Hogwarts." said Hermione.

"OoO can I hold him?" Ginny asked. Helen made this weird noise that sounded like a whistle and a clicking sound combined and the Jobberknoll flew down noiselessly and landed on her shoulder. Then she pointed at Ginny and it flew into her lap.

"I wonder if my trunk has Hogwarts robes." Helen mumbled aloud.

"You're going to Hogwarts?" Ginny asked in surprise.

"Yeah. Salem isn't exactly the safest place for me to be right about now."

"Why not?"

"You'll see in today's paper." Helen predicted.

So tell us about yourself."

"What do you want to know?"

"Ummm well..." Ginny stopped. "If there's a question we ask that you don't want to answer we understand completely." Hermione finished for her.

"Sounds like a good deal." Helen mused.

"How old are you?"

"Fifteen."

"So you're in fifth year."

"Sixth. Skipped ahead."

"How's that possible?"

Helen considered something a moment before replying.

"I started school at nine almost ten years old instead of eleven. Dad had to donate a pretty hefty amount of galleons before the Ministry allowed it. Dad used to be a teacher...or professor you call it... at Salem. Taught me all sorts of spells and jinxes no kid my age was allowed to learn. Cost him galleons for that too. Next question."

Ginny was quiet before asking another one.

"What was it like at Salem?"

"Fun. Kevin and Bianca as well as Harvey and Sabrina made sure of that."

"Did you play Quidditch?"

"Somewhat...the big sport was Quod."

"Er..."

"Quodpot...you know...like Quidditch but different."

"We know." they grimaced.

"I was Quod Captain but with Quidditch I was only reserve keeper."

"You got to play two sports?" Fred said as he suddenly appeared.

"Yup." Helen answered.

"Cool." said George.

"My brothers Fred and George." Ginny explained. The twins sat down on the floor.

"What you gals doing?"

"Asking Helen questions."

"Hey I've got one."

"Shoot."

"Why?"

"No. It's slang for 'go ahead and ask'."

"Would you like some trick sweets George and I invented?"

"You invented?"

"Yeah!" Fred said proudly. "Just don't tell mum we asked you. She'd have a fit."

"Ask her about the sweets later! We're asking her important questions."

"Then don't mind us."

"How did you get your hair wavy like that? It was straight before."

"Really important." George sniggered.

"Answering that question will solve life's mystery that will." Fred snickered.

"Something I made." Helen answered.

"You make things too?" Fred asked incredulously.

Helen nodded.

"What kind of bird is that?" asked George.

"Buster, my pet Jobberknoll."

"Aren't there feathers used in truth serums?" Fred asked eyeing the bird with interest.

"Yeah. You can have these loose ones if you want." she said thrusting them in their hands.

"Cool. Thanks."

"COME ON DOWN FOR BREAKFAST!" said a loud voice.

"That's mum."

Chapter 5: Merger

*a/n: Harry's P.O.V. (point of view)

Harry and Ron went together downstairs. Moody, Lupin, and Mrs. Weasley were already there.

"Good morning Harry, dear." Mrs. Weasley smiled. "Morning Ron."

"Morning mum."

"Morning, Mrs. Weasley." Harry mumbled. He was extremely tired because he'd forced himself to stay awake after having an awful nightmare.

"Now boys...I don't want you asking Helen anything that would upset her okay?"

"Of course we won't!" Ron said outraged. "D'you think we'd purposely do that?"

"Purposely no. Accidentally yes." Mrs. Weasley cut him off before he could reply. "Be nice. It's going to be hard for her to adjust to Hogwarts."

"Why should it?" Harry blurted out. "Hogwarts is the best-"

"She had friends, Potter!" Moody barked. "Aside from her guardian her friends are the only people she's got. Do you think it's going to be easy for her to leave it all?"

"Well...not really." Harry admitted.

"Who is this guardian anyway?" Ron asked.

"I think she'll tell you when she feels like it." Lupin deduced. Suddenly Fred and George appeared, followed by Helen, Hermione, and Ginny. Harry noticed Helen looked a bit more at peace than she did last night.

"That's Harry Potter." Ginny indicated to him. "And my brother Ron."

"Hi." she said.

"'lo." was Harry's answer. He expected Helen's eyes to go wide (not that it needed widening) and to take a glance at his scar but instead she just smiled and sat down next to Fred.

"They make them pretty good at Salem." Ron whispered. "but of course Hogwarts has its goodies too." he added. Harry nodded in agreement. Cho, a Ravenclaw, whom he'd had a crush on for a long time was a really pretty girl. The only problem was that their relationship ended quickly and she'd moved on to another guy.

"D'you reckon there'll be another Yule Ball?" Ron asked hopefully.

"I don't think so." Harry replied. "I think that was just for the Triwizard Tournament." Harry froze. The last thing he wanted to talk about was the tournament that people had died in...that Cedric had died in...and Voldemort had come back because of it.

"Too many serious things have happened. They wouldn't have any celebrations anytime soon." Hermione said wisely.

Mrs. Weasley got up and came back, passing out envelopes to all of them. "Booklists. I'll get the books for you once breakfast is over."

"Can I go with you?" Helen asked eagerly.

"Ummmm I'm not sure your guardian would like that." Mrs. Weasley pointed out.

"I need galleons though."

"Got it." said Mrs. Weasley tossing a large pouch at Helen. "He brought it this morning."

"What about Hogwarts robes."

"In your trunk supposedly."

"But-"

"Sorry, dear. A...ah your guardian wouldn't allow it."

"Alright." Helen sighed.

Mrs. Weasley gave her an apologetic look then turned to the others for support. Before any of them could say anything Helen suddenly started screaming.

"ASHWINDER! THERE'S AN ASHWINDER!" Helen yelled, staring at a thin and grey snake with red eyes sliding down the stairs and then hiding in the shadows. All of them jumped up in alarm. Moody, Lupin, and Mrs. Weasley pointed their wands at it but before they could speak it turned to dust and they could see four brilliantly red eggs glowing from the shadows.

"*Helarse*" shouted Moody, Lupin, Mrs. Weasley as well as Helen and Hermione in union. The eggs turned blue instantly.

"There may have been more ashwinders set loose in the house!" Moody shouted. "Search the dark places in the house, check the fireplaces, and freeze the eggs!"

"Those who don't know the Freezing Charm stay here!"

Harry, Ron, Ginny, Fred, and George stayed behind while the adults, Hermione, and Helen separated. After about thirty seconds there was a loud scream and a thud upstairs. Harry started running and the others followed him. When they reached the

top they found Kreatcher attempting to run down but Fred grabbed him by the arm. Helen was standing near three blue eggs and was breathing heavily.

"What was that loud sound?" Ron asked.

"Are you alright?" Ginny asked.

"That...that thing was pouring...(she pointed to a bottle lying on the ground) that into the fire. Ashwinders can only come from a fire with a magical substance in it that has gone unattended and unsupervised."

"Is everyone alright?"

"What was that loud noise?"

"Everywhere was clear below."

"I don't think there are anymore," came the voices of Moody, Lupin, Mrs. Weasley and Hermione.

Helen stared sheepishly at the others.

"I guess the...house-elf scared me. I froze the eggs but then it...I mean...he just jumped out and I kind of knocked over the chair. That must have been the sound you heard." Helen explained.

"How could the ashwinders...(Mrs. Weasley stopped after looking at the bottle on the floor) has Kreatcher been..."

"Get downstairs." Moody growled. "We'll figure this out."

There were seven shouts of complaint but Mrs. Weasley shooed them out the door.

Chapter 6: Fruity

*a/n: Helen's POV again.

"That mad elf has been nothing but trouble!" Fred spat.

"Disgusting, filthy little-"

"We should still try and be nice to him!" Hermione said. "Dumbledore-"

"Why keep that thing here anyway?" Helen asked as she joined the others at the table, unfolding the daily prophet.

"He knows too much about the order." Ginny explained. "He mostly spends his time now with Buckbeak."

Helen gaped at the paper in her hands.

"What is it?" Ron asked.

They crowded around Helen to read the headlines.

Salem Institute Attacked

The ministry has been notified that last night the illustrious Salem Institute has been broken into. Witnesses say that seven hooded wizards came in without warning and demanded to speak with the Headmaster whom they stunned, as well as the teaching staff and a few students.

"It was really frightening." said a fifth-year. "We saw two students who actually managed to run from the room but they weren't seen again after that. The teachers told us they were alright though."

Whether or not the two missing students are unharmed is a mystery. The staff at Salem only revealed that the wizards were American and that none of the students were injured. The United States Ministry of Magic will be investigating further.

"Well that doesn't seem too bad." Ron spoke up. "No one was hurt."

"They said two students were missing." Helen whispered. "I'm one of them but Kevin...what happened to Kevin?"

They were quiet. No one seemed to have an answer for her but the silence was broken by footsteps coming down the stairs.

"Well I'm on my way to Diagon Alley!" Mrs. Weasley said cheerfully. "Moody's going on some business so Lupin will stay here with you. Behave."

When Moody and Mrs. Weasley were gone Harry suddenly seemed to remember something.

"What's with Ashwinders? Why do you freeze the eggs instead of destroying them?"

Lupin laid seven eggs on the table.

"They give off intense heat and can burn an entire house in a matter of minutes."

"Oh."

"Their eggs, when frozen, can be used in love potions."

Fred and George gave each other odd looks and tried to mask it with false angelic smiles.

Chapter 7: Start Your Broomsticks

"C'mon Hurry!" Ginny said, gently shaking Helen out of her slumber.

"Why?"

"We're going to Hogwarts of course!"

"Oh." Helen said dispiritedly. She was still worried about what had happened to Kevin. Was he alright? Was he hurt? Did Voldemort's followers take him too?

"Hey what's this?" Ginny inquired curiously.

"Photo Album."

"May I look through it?"

"Doesn't matter."

Hermione walked into the room.

"Get ready and then come downstairs for a quick breakfast." Hermione said before noticing Ginny completely engrossed in a thin blue book of some sort.

"What's that?" Hermione asked.

"Helen's album."

Hermione sat down next to Ginny on the opposite bed just as they had done the previous morning.

"Who's that?" Ginny asked. Helen walked across the room and glanced over her shoulder.

"That's me, Kevin, and Bianca."

"Wow! Kevin's cute! Tell us about him." Ginny shouted excitedly.

"How quickly you forget Dean." Hermione said slyly.

"There's nothing wrong with learning about different people." Ginny spoke indignantly.

"Well...he's in seventh year...plays Beater and was Quidditch Captain...umm...he's Head Boy and about one of the greatest friends a girl could have. Bianca is also a good friend, just like he is."

Ginny flipped the page and at that moment Fred and George appeared.

"Woah! Hot pic, Cliff." George stared.

"Thanks. That was at the Halloween costume party."

"They should have had one of those at Hogwarts."

"Hey! That's Quod practise!" Helen said eagerly as Ginny kept turning the page. "Oh and this one was for a Muggle Studies project on what job you could do if you were a muggle. My group all said we could be dancers so we did a performance."

"Nice outfits too." Fred added.

"Hey who are they?" George asked as he pointed to a large group photo."

"Well...at the left is Harvey, he's cool once you befriend him. Next to him is Bianca. The girl beside her is Sabrina. She's a bit on the melodramatic side but life is always fun around her. Kevin and I are the ones at the end."

"We'd better get downstairs before mum has a fit and we'll leave Helen to get ready. Hey do you mind if we keep looking at this down there?"

"It's fine with me." Helen mumbled distractedly. Ginny and Hermione grabbed their trunks and sent them downstairs by the door before sitting down to breakfast. Ron and Harry wondered what the others were looking at.

"What've you got there?" Ron asked.

" Pictures."

"What kind?"

"Of the sky." Fred said sarcastically.

"Yeah, it's a new form of divination...interpreting the future by counting the number of bird-shaped clouds there are." George added, tossing the book at Ron while

he and the others started eating. Ron and Harry went through her school pictures and some with her friends when suddenly Dumbledore's face appeared in one.

"Oy! How did he get there?" Ron asked. "How do they know each other?"

Harry got the feeling that someone was right behind him. He turned behind and saw Helen looking at the two of them with an almost frantic look.

"Oh umm." she started, thinking up a good explanation. "During break I usually go to the summer house in Florida. Dumbledore usually checks...I mean...visits...often."

"So your guardian lives in Florida?" Hermione questioned.

"No. He lives...somewhere else."

"England perhaps?"

"Perhaps."

Hermione nodded in understanding. Harry had no idea why it mattered where Helen's guardian lived.

"Eat up! Eat up!" Mrs. Weasley commanded, interrupting Harry's thoughts. In ten minutes they were boarding the knight bus. Mr. Weasley couldn't get ministry cars, not because of Arthur's connections with Dumbledore, but because Fudge was getting even more paranoid about attracting Voldemort's attention to the ministry. All the passengers on board were flattened as the bus kept traveling at top speed. Many stops later they reached King's Cross Station. Only Harry and Hermione were observant enough to notice that Helen just walked straight through the barrier between platforms 9 and 10 without hesitation. This seemed strange considering that someone who'd never attended Hogwarts knew exactly how to get to the platform. Harry said goodbye to Mrs. Weasley, Fred, George, Moody, and Lupin before joining the others on board the train.

"Well...er...we've got to go to the-"

"I know." Harry cut Ron off. Ron and Hermione had to go to the prefects' compartment, so Harry, Ginny, and Helen found seats with a blond girl reading the Quibbler and a round faced boy holding up an odd plant.

"This is Luna Lovegood and Neville Longbottom." Ginny introduced.

"Nice to meet you." Helen said quietly.

"I haven't seen you before." Luna stated.

"Transfer student."

"Where from?"

"Salem."

"Oh!" Luna began excitedly. "So you were there when they discovered Muckaw Smilars in the school that ate those two students?"

"Uh...actually I was one of those two students and what exactly is a Muckaw Smilar?"

"It's a deadly child eating monster." Luna explained calmly. Helen raised an eyebrow as she looked from Luna to the Quibbler and back to Luna again.

"So what did you get on your O.W.L.s?" Neville asked conversationally. Harry grinned. He'd actually managed to get all the Owls needed to continue on his way to possibly becoming an Auror.

"Seven." Harry answered happily.

"Gran would have been ecstatic if I'd succeeded in getting that" Neville muttered sadly.

"What did you get?"

"More than two." Neville said sadder still. They didn't prod him further.

"What about you, Helen?" Luna asked.

"ten" Helen mumbled quickly. They stared.

"Book worm."

"I don't normally study but seeing as the classes are getting tougher and O.W.L.s are important...I was forced to."

"You're a real Hermione."

"Why? What did she get?"

"All of them probably. She's brilliant."

"Books, Neville." Hermione said happily as she and Ron walked into the compartment. "Books."

While they were there they played Exploding Snap, Wizard Chess, and talked about how glad they were that they didn't have to worry about N.E.W.T's until seventh year.

The trolley came by and they bought chocolate frogs, pumpkin pasties, cauldron cakes, and other food items. Helen was just throwing a horseradish flavored bean out the window before the glass door was opened and in stepped two beefy characters on both sides of a pale pointy chinned boy whom Helen had to admit, even though she wasn't a fan of pallidness, this teen male looked VERY appealing.

"Doesn't this look heart warming." Draco spat moodily. It was evident he was furious that his father had been sent to Azkaban thanks to Harry.

"Sorry you can't join our heart-warming group, seeing as you haven't got a heart." Harry responded coolly.

"Stuffing your face, eh Weasel? Joined in by Potty and the Mudblood." Draco said in barely a whisper, but in the silent room, everyone heard and stood up.

"How's your dear old dad, Malfoy? Have the Dementors given him a little kiss yet?" Harry laughed. Draco's face darkened as he whipped out his wand but Harry was expecting this.

"*Expelliarmus*" Harry bellowed. Draco flew into his cronies.

"You'll pay!" Draco yelled as he, Crabbe, and Goyle left the room.

"Bad mood he's in." Ron noticed.

"We'd better leave as well." Hermione said. After they left Harry, Neville, and Helen changed into their Hogwarts robes. When it was time to get off the train they grabbed their pets...Hedwig, Buster, and Trevor as they walked toward the carriages.

"Omg!" Helen gasped. "Thestrals! Thestrals pulling the carriages."

"They're okay." Harry answered quickly. He wondered who Helen knew who had died but then he remembered she was parentless. He turned behind him to ask her something but then she was gone.

"Where did Helen go?" Harry asked the others. They shrugged their shoulders and he looked curiously through the throng of students but couldn't see her. Harry did spot straight, long, dark hair identical to Helen's but it proved to be Cho. He stared at her coldly. He didn't want anything to do with HER after constantly reminding him about Cedric and going out with Michael Corner. That's when he noticed the Head Girl badge on her robes. He turned his head away and sat down inside the carriage. After a while their ride ended as they reached two large oak doors and walked through them. The three marched through the entrance and into the great hall where Harry sat with Ron and Hermione.

"Where's Helen?" Ron asked immediately.

"Dunno." Harry replied, looking around.

"Well she has to get sorted, hasn't she?" Hermione said as though it was the most obvious thing in the world...and it actually should have been.

"Oh yeah. You reckon she went across the lake with the first years?"

"Possibly."

"Hey...who's that next to Hagrid?" Hermione asked in an edgy voice.

"Oh, that's...she was at the hearing last year." Harry answered promptly. Then he noticed someone else. "PERCY!"

Harry, Ron, and Hermione stared as they saw the third eldest Weasley son who had severed ties with his family sitting at the staff table.

"Please tell me he isn't the new Defense Against the Dark Arts teacher."

"More than likely he's the new High Inquisitor." Hermione frowned. "I believe that woman...Madam Marchbanks will be the Defense Against the Dark Arts teacher."

"Oh my life is going to be miserable!" Ron moaned bitterly. "Percy! aUgH!"

*A/n: I wanted to write Mundungus Fletcher as DADA teacher and get rid of the whole High Inquisitor thing but...yeah. Fletcher would be too busy with the Order and stolen items and Percy...well didn't Fudge want to spy at Hogwarts? I'm sure Fudge MIGHT have lightened up a *little* at the Dumbledore-was-right-about-Voldemort thing and may even ask him for advice again but I don't know...we'll see when the 6th book comes out I guess. I may be psychic but I'm not a mind reader... especially when it comes to J.K.'s stories...I mostly go by feelings and intuition so Sorry!

The Great Hall was silenced when Professor McGonagall walked in, setting the sorting hat down on the stool. Usually the first years would follow her in but this time she entered alone. The hat sprang to life and started to sing:

Four great founders had goals to reach,

Unified by their want to teach.

None of them wanted to fool,

Towards decisions made for the school.

There was one issue that could not be decided

And this is why the houses are now divided.

For Gryffindor wanted those who were brave

And Hufflepuff admired those who could behave.

Slytherin was fond of students that were cunning

While Ravenclaw adored the ones whose cleverness was stunning.

If you all have listened to me,

Then you should have been able to see

That as a team we shall prevail

But separated we're certain to fail.

For now I'll look at you within

And sort you, so let us begin.

The students stared a moment, waiting for the Sorting hat to continue but no other sound came so they all began to clap.

"That's got to be the shortest sorting song I've ever heard!" Ron said curiously.

Before Hermione or Harry could say anything, Professor McGonagall began to speak.

"On behalf of certain events that have occurred this summer...Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry will be delighted in accepting three transfer students."

Helen, a blond, and a brown haired boy stepped forward. The students in the hall murmured amongst themselves and fell silent.

"Sixth year: Cliff, Helen." Professor McGonagall said. Helen walked forward cautiously and sat down on the stool as the professor placed the hat upon her head. Harry could see how nervous she was and then after a few seconds the hat shouted "GRYFFINDOR". Harry cheered along with the others as she gave a radiant smile as she sat down next to Ron. The applause subsided quickly.

"Sixth year: Killert, Bianca." Professor McGonagall read from her parchment.

"She's definitely not a Slytherin." Helen whispered confidently. "I've read all about the houses and she's not evil or conniving or even pure blood. Ambitious yeah but-"

"SLYTHERIN" the hat shouted. Harry looked at the stunned expression on Helen's face and the equally surprised look on Bianca's face. The Slytherins were gleeful that Gryffindor wasn't the only house that had a sixth year from another school.

"Seventh year: Relle, Kevin."

"I hope he's a Gryffindor!" Parvati whispered to Lavender and they both broke out in a fit of giggles.

"GRYFFINDOR."

The girls clapped and cheered a great deal louder than the boys and the girls from the other houses sulked a bit.

"He's like Cedric Diggory reborn!" came someone from the Hufflepuff table. Kevin sat down between Helen and Ginny.

"I'm surprised Bianca didn't make it to this house with us." Kevin whispered before McGonagall beckoned for the first years and called out "Apilgus, Henry."

"Same here." Helen said slightly bothered. "RAVENCLAW"

"Where are you from?" Lavender asked Kevin above the cheers.

"Salem." Kevin worded "Bulby, Sara." "HUFFLEPUFF"

After a few minutes they finally called "Yules, Xavior" who became a "SLYTHERIN"

"Welcome students of new and old!" Dumbledore said, standing up. "Tuck in!"

Tons of food appeared on the table as the students started to indulge in it.

"So why aren't you or Bianca at Salem?" Helen asked as she helped herself to some salad.

"You didn't think we'd leave you here alone did you? Sabrina and Harvey tried but their parents forbade it."

"But isn't switching schools going to be really hard for you, especially? I mean with N.E.W.T.s and everything?"

"I suppose." Kevin said unconcerned. "You need Salem support!"

"I have Alby."

"He'll be busy."

Harry didn't think he heard right. Why would Dumbledore be...

"Dumbledore's your guardian!" Hermione said triumphantly. "I knew it!"

Helen looked like she was going to hit herself.

"My gosh! I let it slip in one day!"

"Dumbledore is-" Ron said in awe.

"My guardian, yes. Please don't say anything to anyone." Helen whispered.
"Please."

"We promise." Harry said immediately. "So, who else knows?"

"Mrs. Baker at Salem. Then there's McGonagall here...and that's it."

Helen hastily changed the subject and they continued talking until their plates were wiped clean and Dumbledore stood up.

"Now that everyone has finished their meal...I beg you'll allow me to make the start-of-term notices. To all the first years, new students, and older students who should have this engraved in their memories...the forest on the grounds is out of bounds to all students. Mr. Filch insists I remind you all, as with every year, that magic is not allowed to be put to use in corridors between classes and so are plenty of other things. For the full list of forbidden items, check Mr. Filch's office door. We have two fine people joining us this year. Firstly, welcome back Hagrid as Care of Magical Creatures teacher. (brief applause) We have Madam Marchbanks as Defense Against the Dark Arts teacher. (More applause) Hogwarts has a new High Inquisitor...Mr. Percy Weasley! (Polite applause) Quidditch try-outs will take place fairly soon. Check your common room boards for exact details."

Dumbledore dismissed everyone. Ron and Hermione ran to help the first years get to the common rooms as did everyone else and before Harry, Helen, Kevin, and Neville knew it they were in their four poster beds and fell right asleep.

Chapter 8: Confrontation

Helen woke an hour after she'd fallen asleep. She couldn't fool herself. There was no way she could get a decent night's sleep until she talked with Dumbledore. Snatching a set of robes, she crept silently out of bed, as not to wake up her dorm mates. Slowly and carefully she made her way until she reached two giant stone gargoyles. "Pepper Imps" she said clearly. Helen knocked on the door and stepped inside. Her guardian was petting Fawkes with his backside towards a glaring Minister of Magic.

"Hello Helen." Dumbledore said calmly, still stroking Fawkes.

"Hello Alby."

"What are you doing awake, miss?" Fudge demanded.

"And hello to you too Minister. Don't you remember me?" Helen asked coldly. He was the idiot who didn't believe Dumbledore and had wasted over twelve months doing nothing to prevent Voldemort from reeking havoc. Helen first met him at a party her parents held at their winter home in Carna.

"Who are you?" Fudge asked.

"Helen Cliff."

"Cliff!" Fudge said taken back. "Yes...yes of course. I remember very well. How's your uncle?"

"Killed a week after my parents did thanks to Voldemort."

"DON'T SAY THE NAME!" Fudge whimpered.

"A minister who's afraid of saying his name? Tut tut!"

"That's enough Helen." Dumbledore warned. "Minister, we shall resume our discussion at another time?"

"Y-yes. Of-of course." Fudge stuttered. "And you g-get to bed!" he added before scurrying away.

Dumbledore turned to face her. "I expected you to come immediately after the feast."

"I needed a nap first." Helen retorted, sitting down on a chair. "Are you going to explain to me what's been going on? Like why I was kidnapped, for starters?"

Dumbledore then sat down behind his desk.

"Helen." he began. "There is a lot more to you than you even realize. The matter is immensely complicated. I dare not leave a single detail out. It is imperative that you fully understand and embrace what I tell...or show you...for it involves Harry Potter and someone whom he cares deeply for."

"Tell me."

"I can't tell you everything tonight. I have to start from the very beginning." Dumbledore said. He took a strange looking bowl out from a cabinet and placed it on his desk.

"What is that?" Helen asked curiously.

"A foreign form of a pensieve. This belonged to your grandmother."

"My...My grandmother?" Helen stammered. "How did you get it?"

"She left it in my possession."

"You knew my grandmother?" Helen asked wonderingly. "What was she like?"

"I'll let you see for yourself." Dumbledore said. Helen reached out a hand and stuck a finger inside the pensieve and then suddenly she was inside a highly furnished room. Two people were there. Both wore old fashioned clothes, from the 30s. Helen gasped as she saw that the girl standing across from a handsome boy looked almost exactly like her. They had the same lips, the same nose, the same height and size, and the same hair. The only differences were that the girl's hair was shoulder length and her eyes were slightly more exotic looking. As the girl turned her head, Helen saw that on the left side of her neck she had a triangle shaped mark. The same size and place as Helen's. This girl...her grandmother...was having a shouting contest with the boy in front of her...

~* THE VEIL...by Foxi Blair*~

The year is 1936. Chapter 1: Wills and Persuasion

"Woah! Hold on! Time out! Rewind!"

"Annie! Hear me out-"

"Hear you out?" A tall raven haired girl screamed. "It's absurd! Absolutely absurd!"

"But Annie!" John pleaded. "I've wanted this my entire life!"

"Did you *really* expect me to travel with you on some phony expedition?"

"It's not a hoax! I swear it! Let me explain-"

"No! I don't want to hear your explanations, John! You have to be out of your mind if you think I'd go through with it!"

"This is a once in a lifetime opportunity!"

"Yes! Because once you find this place your life ends there!"

"Well yes there *are* curses and demons and monsters and-"

"NO! There's the scorching hot sun, low water source, and once inside one of those pyramids there are traps all over the place." she scoffed. "No curses!"

"Listen..."

"No YOU listen to me John! My mother was an Egyptian. She was born into one of the oldest families around. I heard legend after legend and myth after myth about the things inside those tombs and what happens to people who went messing about!"

"We're not going to mess about!"

"Then what do you call it?"

"An adventure!"

"AUGH!"

"No one believes in the Lost Palace of Eumaria."

"Hmmm. Maybe that's because it doesn't exist!"

"Y'know sometimes I wonder how you can have such a dull imagination."

"And sometimes I wonder how I could have such a fairytale-lover as a boyfriend."

They stared at each other for a moment and then broke into a grin.

"Annie please! Think about it!" John said as he sat beside her on the couch. "Ever since I was a little boy I've been fascinated about Ancient Egyptian times and then BAM! I came to London a year ago and I found you! An Egyptian!"

"Half Egyptian and only by birth" Anyanka interrupted.

"You can't possibly want to avoid going there forever."

"Oh can't I?"

"What about those dreams you've been having?"

"What about them?"

"And the journal we found!"

"What about it?"

"Don't you think it means something?"

"Coincidence"

"You have to know at least something."

"Waste of time talking about."

"Won't you at least be open-minded about it all?"

"MY FATHER VANISHED TRYING TO FIND THAT STUPID EUMARIA PLACE! HE DIDN'T LIKE THE IDEA OF GOING BUT HE DID IT TO PLEASE MY MOTHER! THEN MY UNCLE WENT TO TRY AND FIND HIM AND HE WENT MISSING TOO! MOTHER BELIEVED IN STUPID REINCARNATION AND THAT FATHER WOULD BRING HER BACK SO SHE WENT AND KILLED HERSELF! ALL I KNOW IS THAT EVERYONE WHO BELIEVES IN THAT MAKE-BELIEVE PLACE ENDS UP DEAD! IS THAT OPEN-MINDED ENOUGH FOR YOU?" Anyanka burst into tears and John put his arm around her.

"I'm so sorry, Annie. I didn't know." John whispered, on the verge of tears himself.
"I didn't know."

Anyanka fumbled with her necklace that was cool to the touch.

"If it means so much to you...I'll go." Anyanka spoke in a barely audible tone. John stared a bit guiltily at the floor.

"You don't have to-"

"I will." She sighed. "My mum would have wanted it." She was quiet for a moment and then...

"She told me some things about it. Would you like to know?"

"Only if you're up for it. I really don't want you upset again. Honest I don't. It isn't worth it."

Anyanka cleared her throat, looked into John's loving blue eyes, and started her story.

~* END OF CHAPTER *~

Dumbledore placed a hand on Helen's shoulder.

"That's enough for tonight." he said before Helen found herself back in Dumbledore's office.

"But Alby!"

"You'll need rest so that you can have a good first day back." Dumbledore said in a voice that ended it. Helen stood up and gave "Alby" a hug for agreeing to eventually tell her everything, and left.

Helen's brain worked as fast as it could to process everything she'd seen and heard. Her grandmother, Anyanka, was half Egyptian and the fate of her family (death of parents and uncle) ended up the same as Helen's. Anyanka and her friend John were talking about trying to find some lost palace but what did that have to do with Helen or Harry for that matter? Then it hit her...after "Annie" started crying she had fumbled with a necklace...or amulet! Wasn't that what her captors had been looking for? The amulet? But Helen didn't have it, nor did she know where it could be. Her parents certainly never mentioned it at all. Helen pondered this until she finally fell asleep.

Chapter 9: Normality

Hermione woke up Helen and they went down to the Great Hall together. Katie Bell came running to their table.

"I'm Gryffindor Captain." Katie shouted excitedly.

"Awesome." Ginny grinned.

"Hey Harry...Dumbledore says your lifetime ban Umbridge gave is off."

"Great." Harry said brightly.

"Well Anyway Quidditch Try Outs are this Friday at 5:00."

"Cool." Harry and Ron replied.

"Yeah and Gin...you said you wanted to try out for Chaser?"

"Yes." Ginny nodded.

"Well that'll mean we need another chaser and we NEED new beaters. Kirke and Sloper are dreadful. Anyway see you then...oh and umm...Kevin...welcome to Gryffindor." she blushed.

"Thanks." Kevin answered bashfully. Hermione noticed Helen didn't look happy.

"Thanks for waking me or else I would probably have missed all our classes." Helen thanked Hermione." Speaking of which...do we get individual schedules?"

"McGonagall will pass them out." Harry explained. "Usually after post."

The second he said that, hundreds of owls soared in and started dropping letters and packages at students. Two tawny owls headed their way. One dropped a letter at Harry, the other at Helen. They looked at each other unsurely and opened their letters. Hermione and Ron looked over Harry's shoulder to read his while Kevin looked at Helen's. Harry's read...

Harry,

You are to continue your Occlumency lessons with Professor Severus Snape.

Lessons will be on Mondays and Wednesdays at six o'clock.

You know how important these lessons will be now.

Sincerely,

Albus Dumbledore

"You get this too?" Harry asked Helen. They swapped letters and Helen's was different.

Helen,

You have the natural born talent of reading and interpreting the emotions of others, however, there is still much you could learn.

On Mondays and Wednesdays at six o'clock I would like you to come to my office where I will teach you Legilimency.

Yes, you know what others are feeling but it would be useful to see memories people have...that way you could see why some are the way they are.

Sincerely,

Alby

p.s. As I remind you of all things you've learned...please use your gifts wisely and respect others' privacy.

"Well that's interesting." Helen affirmed. Hermione folded up the Daily Prophet.

"Anything?" Ron asked.

"Nothing." Hermione confirmed. Professor McGonagall came up behind them and handed their schedules.

"Why've you guys taken all those classes?"

"I don't know about Hermione," Helen said "but I'm taking them in case I change my mind on what job I'd like in the future."

"Good idea." Kevin mused, smiling.

"Glad you agree."

"Well I'd better get my books ready." Kevin said, getting up. "I have Herbology. See you."

Hermione looked up to say goodbye and she saw that many eyes followed his progress out of the Hall. Ron however, looked enlightened.

"Madam Marchbanks! Professor Marchbanks was also here to give us our O.W.L. examinations!" Ron realized.

"I didn't even remember!" Hermione said raising an eyebrow. "Nice detective work, Ron."

Ron beamed. His beam turned into a frown as he remembered that Gryffindors and Slytherins had Double Potions. Helen didn't know why he was so worried but she soon found out.

Helen walked into Professor Snape's classroom. The Slytherins sat to the left side of the room while the Gryffindors remained on the right. She noticed that there weren't as many students as she'd expected. It was true that getting an "O" O.W.L. was the only way to get into N.E.W.T. potions but she'd expected more people.

"Settle down." said a snarly yet cold voice. Helen wondered why he said that when no one was speaking. She focused on him again when he started talking. "You all are in this potions class because you've gotten top scores on your O.W.L.s although I am surprised to see certain faces." he stared in Harry's direction. "But otherwise most of you got your scores based on actual 'talent' "

Helen didn't know if she was just being suspicious but it seemed like he was talking about Harry.

No, that couldn't be the case. Yeah, she knew Snape's past. She'd seen him a few times with Alby but as crooked as he seemed to be she never thought of him as unreasonable. In fact he looked like the type of person who you felt sorry for because he had the appearance of someone who hadn't had enough love as a child. In any case, she had to be making a big deal out of nothing...right?

"Now last year you made Strengthening Potions so this year you will be starting with Weakening Potions. The instructions are on the board and ingredients are where they normally would be. Might I add a little warning...I made a large batch of Strengthening Potion which will allow your weakening potions to be tested on yourselves and if you've done it wrong then that would be very unfortunate for you because you could get yourself poisoned. Begin."

Helen left to get her ingredients and then looked at the board.

1. Make a Starter Potion.

Helen racked her memory. What were the directions for the starter potion? She believed it was nearly stewed cabbage mixed with daisy roots, vera beetles, and glass monixes. She walked back over to the store cupboard, grabbed the things she needed but she glanced over and saw Snape whispering something at Harry, who was looking like an angry bull struggling not to be irritated.

Maybe Snape was just venting a little bit of steam off Harry. In any case she'd need to try help.

"Uh...sir." Helen asked.

"Normally we raise our hands in this classroom Miss Cliff."

"Yes sir. I was just wondering how much time we have."

"An hour and twenty minutes." Snape said, striding to his desk.

Helen dropped her ingredients into her cauldron and in twenty minutes she'd finished making her starter potion. Next step.

2. Cut five pieces of 1" cubes and add one every two minutes, each time stirring in the opposite direction as the previous time.

Helen reread the instructions again. She wasn't a hundred percent sure she had gotten it correctly so she tried reading it once more when she saw Snape whispering to Harry again and this time it looked like Harry was going to lose it. Helen shot her hand in the air but Snape paid no notice. Helplessly she looked around for a distraction. She noticed an empty glass being unwatched.

"*Wingardium Leviosa*" she mumbled as it rose a few inches in the air. With a flick of her wand it cracked as it hit the floor, making everyone in the room jump. Snape repaired it with his wand and was turning back to Harry when he noticed Helen's airborne hand.

"Yes."

"On question two it says each time stirring in the opposite direction. Does that mean that after I add one cube I should stir it left and then after two minutes add a cube and stir to the right?"

"If I need to answer that then maybe you shouldn't be in this class Miss Cliff." he snapped. Helen raised an eyebrow at him but kept silent.

3. Lower the heat and sprinkle powdered lopilus herbs counterclockwise while stirring clockwise. Potion should turn purple after five minutes.

4. Increase the heat and add mudflies and twigmeat into the potion simultaneously. Stir after every five minutes for a total of fifteen minutes. Should be silvery grey at this point.

Helen rolled her eyes. This potion was annoying her a bit. Sure, it wasn't half as complicated as some of the potions she'd made before but it was tedious nevertheless. After she'd completed a few more steps she realized that Snape was trying to talk to Harry again. She definitely was NOT imagining it and before she knew it Harry opened his mouth and thankfully what looked like swear words coming out of his mouth was blocked completely as someone's potion exploded from the Slytherin section of the room. Most of the potion hit the walls but Pansy Parkinson got full blast of a very nasty looking liquid that covered her hair, entire face, and arms. She started screaming frantically as if it was burning and then steam started to fill the room and they realized that it actually WAS burning her face. Snape ordered someone to take her to the hospital wing.

"WHICH IDIOT MADE THAT POTION?" Snape asked angrily. Everyone turned to look at Goyle who looked a bit frightened actually. He stared at his feet and looked like he was going to admit it when suddenly Malfoy opened his mouth.

"Potter." he drawled.

"WHAT." All the Gryffindors shouted in union.

"Some of Potter's potion flew through the air and landed on our side of the room."

"Well in that case...due to the damage to Miss Parkinson...fifty points from Gryffindor." Snape replied.

"WHAT!" The Gryffindors yelled again in union.

"Professor!" Helen choked; simply astounded. "We all saw Goyle with it and besides...you were standing right by Harry so you know he couldn't have done it."

"Potter has gone to great lengths to cause trouble. It wouldn't surprise me and I think I recall seeing something fly past."

"Yeah! From Goyle's cauldron!" Helen pressed.

"Miss Cliff...might I remind you once and for all this is my classroom. I am the teacher here and it is my observations that count, not yours." Snape spat. "Just because you've been around the headmaster a few times does not give you the nerve to disregard the respect of a teacher. Do I make myself plain?"

Helen's entire face seemed to darken somehow and she looked at Snape with an expression that made him take a step backward and almost topple over Harry's chair. He looked shaken up about something but recovered quickly and turned away.

"There w-won't be enough time to test your potions so instead of leaving here knowing your grade you will receive it when you come to class next. Bring your samples to the front of the room and for homework write an essay, a foot's length of parchment on what you think went wrong today and what you could do to fix it. Class dismissed."

Everyone put up their samples and left the class quickly but Helen stayed behind while waiting for everyone else to leave. As Harry, Hermione and Ron left they heard Snape saying 'I have another class' before the door slammed shut.

"What in bloody hell was up with Snape?" Ron ranted. "Fifty points! That-"

He said a long stream of swears...extreme and some made up.

"Ron!" Hermione scolded. "I agree but supposing someone hears you!"

"I don't care!" Ron raved. "That son of a bludger has gone too far! Did you see how he spent the whole time getting on Harry's case?"

"And it's a good thing Helen kept interrupting Snape before Harry lost it."

"How?"

"She kept asking questions and she broke Gregory Bogweil's glass." Hermione explained as they walked down the grounds.

"Well it didn't do much since he still managed to take fifty points off me!" Harry spoke for the first time in a very wrathful tone.

"Well mate..." Ron said brightly, "Hermione will win those back in a snap!"

'I guess.'

By this time they were standing with the rest of their Gryffindor classmates as well as the Slytherins.

"'ello, class." Hagrid beamed. Harry couldn't help but cheer up. "Welcome back ter another year of Care of Magical Creatures."

"Yes we all look forward to it." Draco drawled sarcastically.

"Firs' off we'll be studying the Jarvey. Anyone know what a Jarvey is?"

Hermione raised her hand and Hagrid called on her.

"The Jarvey is a magical creature that resembles an overly large ferret—" she looked at Malfoy and he turned a bit pink, "but it can say a few short phrases in almost a constant stream. They can be found in Britain, Ireland, and North America."

"Righ' yer are, 'ermione. Ten points." Hagrid grinned. "Yeah, Jarveys can talk but they mostly say rude words. They like to live underground but during the day I keep 'em in these crates. Now I want all of yous ter form groups of two and feed the Jarveys some live rats."

The girls gave a loud screech and backed away. Hagrid seemed to notice this.

"They eat moles, voles, and rats so in this case I guess the boys can toss rats into the crates."

While the boys reluctantly did this Helen finally showed up, though hanging back a bit.

"Why'd you stay behind?" Ron asked, creeping away from the rats too.

"No reason." was all Helen replied with.

"What was Professor Snape talking about when he said you hung out with Dumbledore?" Draco asked.

"Why are you so interested?" Helen asked.

"Wondering if your parents are mudblood lovers too, like the Weasleys."

"What's it to you?"

"Why not answer my question? The Cliff's only had one pureblood branch left but they all were supposed to be dead."

"Well obviously not all of them are." Helen answered sourly.

"So you ARE a pureblood."

"Of course she is!" Bianca answered for her. "She's my best friend isn't she?"

"Then why does she hang around Weasel trash?" Draco said turning to Bianca.

"Who ARE you?" Helen asked in disgust.

"Draco Malfoy." he said with a nose in the air.

"Figures." Helen sniffed. "Death Eater families ALWAYS believe they're better than others, even though they worship an ugly freak like Voldemort."

Draco's eyes grew if possible, even colder.

"Clearly, Bianca, your friend doesn't share the same views that you do." Draco muttered.

"What are you talking about?" Helen asked, narrowing her eyes.

"You mean you haven't told her, Bianca? Keeping your opinions of mudbloods a secret, eh? You sly thing." Draco said "A true Slytherin."

"Bianca doesn't agree with your prejudiced pureblood standards, Coco."

"It's DRACO."

Bianca looked a bit nervously and then changed the subject.

"I think class is over."

The students back towards the castle and went into the Great Hall for lunch.

"How can Bianca stand being in a group with those arrogant jerks?" Helen muttered, jabbing forcefully into her salad. "I mean what gives them the right to be so mean to people without getting to know them first? My gosh!"

"Bad first day?" Kevin asked kindly as he sat down next to her.

"Those Slytherins! AUGH! How do you guys put up with it?" Helen asked moodily.

"That wasn't as bad it could be." Harry grumbled. "But it figures. Snape's head of their house."

"They get especially aggressive for Quidditch." Ron warned.

"AUGH." Helen yelled and stabbed her salad. Kevin took the knife gently from her hand and replaced it with a fork.

"Don't worry about it." Kevin said soothingly. "Hey...you didn't go for a run today did you."

"No." Helen admitted.

"Run?" Ron asked.

"Yeah. At Salem Helen and I used to go for a run every morning. It calmed our nerves enough to bear the rest of the school day, but don't worry." Kevin added quickly after seeing the look on her face, "I was too tired to go jogging today but I plan on it tomorrow."

"Cool." Helen smiled.

After lunch was over they headed to Defense Against the Dark Arts class.

"Good Afternoon, class."

"Good Afternoon, Professor Marchbanks."

"Wands away and quills out." she commanded. "Now, I reviewed what the Ministry believes you all should be studying in this class and I can say that I find it might challenging for seven year olds but definitely not 6th years, so therefore I will teach what Professor Dumbledore advised. For the few weeks I'm here, I'll be teaching-"

"What?" Ron blurted.

"Excuse me, Mr. Weasley?"

"You aren't teaching this whole year?"

"Well since I am the head examiner of O.W.L.s and N.E.W.T.s it would be perfect for me to teach you in Defense Against the Dark Arts seeing as I know everything that will be on the examinations, however, I am here at Hogwarts merely as a substitute until Dumbledore finds a suitable teacher. Back to the topic...I'll be teaching you how to defend yourself against certain afflictions and ailments Dark wizards and witches can place on a person. The one I'd like to talk with you about today is the Vener Curse. Can anyone tell me about it? Yes Miss...."

"Granger."

"Yes Miss Granger."

"The Vener Curse is a curse that is not commonly used because the slightest mispronunciation would leave the curser in a worse condition than the curse itself can even give."

"Very good. Five points to Gryffindor. Can anyone tell me what the curse, when effective, can actually do? Yes Miss..."

"Cliff."

"Cliff? Oh. Okay yes Miss...Miss Cliff."

Helen looked at her strangely before answering.

"The Vener Curse gives the person a rash for a day and if it isn't stopped it turns into giant painful blisters. If the counter curse isn't performed within two days then the blisters become holes in the skin and blood pours out. The person eventually bleeds to death."

"Another five points for Gryffindor. Yes those are some of the common effects of the Vener Curse, however there are a few rare cases where some just die from the rash. The entire thing is extremely painful really. The curse can also be performed on animals. Now would Mr. Weasley please pass out these frogs. I put the Vener curse on all of them. Now the countercurse is '*Tottleprefa*'. Ten points to everyone who masters to heal their frog by the end of class. Quills and parchment away now. Wands out!"

Everyone eagerly was trying to heal their frogs but it was a difficult task. The frogs the curse had been subjected to were in immense pain. They were either rocking all around the boxes they were in or doing some crazed movement. With ten minutes to go Hermione successfully healed the frog and at the last second Helen did as well. Professor Marchbanks was pleased and awarded thirty points. Twenty to Hermione and Helen and ten to the rest of the class for trying. Harry, Hermione, Helen, and Ron cheered up a great deal now that they'd won back all the points lost from potions.

"That was the absolute BEST lesson we've had in Defense Against the Dark Arts since Lupin!" Ron cheered happily on their way to the Great Hall for dinner. "No

homework at all, mates! None! Imagine winning thirty house points in just one class! Too bad she isn't staying for long."

"You all look happy." Kevin smiled.

"That Marchbanks is great." Ron grinned. "And no homework!"

"Lucky you." Kevin grumbled. "N.E.W.T. year. Packing with homework! I'm telling you!"

"What job are you trying to get?" Hermione asked.

"I couldn't decide between Healer, Auror, or something in the Department of Magical Accidents and Catastrophes but then I ruled those last two out because I'd be working with the Ministry and besides...Helen wants to put away dark wizards so if she gets hurt I'd better be a healer to help her!"

"But you said you ruled out the last two because you'd be in the Ministry but it needs good wizards to keep it from collapsing!"

"Well that's what Helen's there for." He laughed. "She'll have the pleasure of that."

"Yeah real pleasure." She said sarcastically. "Work with the same people who wanted to throw Alby in Azkaban and discredit the two people who deserve it least. Alby did more great things in his life than the last two ministers of magic did combined and multiplied by five, and Harry's been saving everyone's butt each year and then the idiots want to make jokes about him? Crackpots."

With that last note everyone finished their dinner. Ron and Kevin went to the Quidditch field to practice. Hermione went to the library, meanwhile Harry went to Snape's office for Occlumency and Helen went to Dumbledore's for Legilimency.

"Hello, Helen." Dumbledore beamed.

"Hi Alby." Helen smiled.

"Good first day?"

"Not over yet. Hermione and I still have Astronomy."

"I see. Well let's get to it then shall we." Dumbledore stated, rather than asked. "You won't need your wand."

"But I thought you needed a wand to do Legilimency."

"Most wizards do but you won't. Like I explained in the letter...you have a born gift; a talent that enables you to understand the hidden feelings and emotions in a person. To demonstrate...look at me, Helen. What do you see?"

Helen already knew what Dumbledore was talking about. When she looked at Snape she sensed a lot of past pain and unhappiness. With Kevin she saw cheerfulness but a secret he kept hidden inside. She looked into Dumbledore's twinkling blue eyes. Dumbledore was a bit harder to read. She stared for a moment before speaking.

"You're pleased at the moment. So pleased that you have almost entirely put away the tension and anxiousness out of your mind. Your worries are hidden deep." Helen sighed. "But Alby, this is a no brainer. Of course you're worried with You-kn-with Voldemort back."

"Still not saying his name in public?"

"It's annoying to see them cringe so it's a habit just saying You-know-who."

"I see."

"Anyway..."

"Yes. Your emotion readings aren't in full detail but it's still a very good start. Once you've strengthened it you will have no troubles at all. Now...try to penetrate my mind with yours. Go!"

(Five minutes later)

"No fair! You know Occlumency AND Legilimency. How am I supposed to progress if I don't start at a simple mind?"

"Who says I don't have a simple mind." Dumbledore joked.

"Alby!"

"Try again, Helen. Patience. Be calm and be focused."

They tried it for two hours before Helen insisted they break. After another hour Dumbledore told her to have a seat at his desk. He opened his cabinet and pulled out her grandmother's pensieve.

"Now...to continue where you left off." Dumbledore spoke. Helen eagerly sat forward and stuck her hand in the swirling mist.

She was right back where she left off. Her grandmother, Anyanka (Annie), was going to tell her friend Johnny about the Lost Palace of Eumaria.

~*Chapter 2 "Clearance" *~

"Princess Eumaria's treasure was stolen by Samusotepso and she ordered he be killed. As he was dying he unleashed a curse illness to all Eumaria's people (the Eriams) that had only one cure and it was hidden beyond the widow's veil, along with Eumaria's treasure. The Eriam people who had left Egypt before the curse came into effect survived. Those who went back died. All who go beyond the veil do not return."

"So Princess Eumaria owned the palace right?" John asked.

"Yes." Anyanka answered.

"Who was the thief? Samsotepza or whoever."

"Samusotepso was a healer who stole the treasure and hid it behind the veil. He's the one who put the Tepso curse."

"What?"

"Tepso is a sickness that causes intense heat on the inflicted person and the person dies once every inch of the body turns grey."

"And what's this veil...the one that everyone dies with."

"The Widow's Veil is a gateway to the dead. Samusotepso hid the cure to Tepso and the treasure beyond it."

"So is there any saying on how it's possible to get past the veil?"

"It's rumored that the Princess has something that only her true heir possesses. It will enable the heir to pass through the veil and come back."

"That's the only way?"

"Well...there's also a rumor...though my mother said she doesn't believe in this one...it's said that if the gods favored someone then they would also be able to go through and come back unharmed. That's everything I know." Anyanka finished.

"One more question." John asked.

"What?"

"How did the Palace become lost?"

"A spell supposedly. Only visible to sorcerers and sorceresses. Not non-magical people."

"Excellent." John said with a secretive grin. "Excellent."

~*END OF CHAPTER*~

"Time to go." Dumbledore said.

"But I just got here!"

"Yes but I dare say it will be hours before you stop thinking about what you've just witnessed and I do believe you said you had Astronomy."

"Oh yeah..."

Helen was back in Dumbledore's office.

"Go on to your Common Room." Dumbledore instructed.

"Okay." Helen obeyed. Just as Dumbledore predicted she DID keep thinking about everything but was forced to put her thoughts aside when she and Hermione went up to the Astronomy tower for class. After that she finished half her assigned homework and then went to bed with the thoughts of her mysterious family background on her mind until she fell asleep.

Chapter 10: Squiggle

"Hey!" Kevin called to Helen as she jogged towards him.

"Morning sleepy." she joked, straightening out her jogging outfit. "Ready to run?"

"You bet."

The jogged around the Quidditch pitch for about fifteen minutes before they slowed down to a walk.

"Remember Carna?" Kevin asked.

"Yes of course." Helen replied.

"Well...Katie told me about Hogsmeade."

"Oh yeah that's right...the only all magical community left in Britain."

"Well...it's in two months...I know that...but I thought maybe we could...we could--"

"Hey you two!" said a cheery voice. Helen spun around and looked down at...Cho Chang. "Great day for a run isn't it?"

"Was." Helen said, resisting the urge to scream at Cho's intrusion. "Well I'd better get back to the castle to get cleaned up and into robes before breakfast." Helen mumbled as she ran back towards the castle.

Helen frowned. If she was at Salem she could have gone with Kevin to Carna and now that they were at Hogwarts she'd almost been asked to Hogsmeade but then CHO had to butt in. Helen didn't like that girl one bit. On the outside she looked like a sweet, innocent seventeen year-old but inside...She had natural charm that could get any guy to go out with her if she wanted them to. Helen wasn't sure if her readings of Cho were accurate. She looked so...preppy. Maybe Cho just didn't realize how much she could affect guys...yeah...that must be it.

Helen's first week at Hogwarts was usual for school. She'd successfully planted Venus Gnome Catchers in Herbology, transformed a rat into a cat in Transfiguration, memorized the voyage of Totus the Weilder in History of Magic, melted a metal rod in Charms, got her Jarvey to say "Pretty Hell" (couldn't quite get it to say "Helen") in Care of Magical Creatures, successfully weakened someone in Potions, Predicted a strange heat wave coming the next year in Divination, explained how computers did almost everything in the muggle world for Muggle Studies, and could heal a monkey from the Vener curse. Her Legilimency lessons weren't getting any easier and she hadn't been allowed to see more from Annie's pensieve but Quidditch try-outs occupied her time.

"Alright Gryffindors!" Captain Katie Bell shouted. "We have two chaser and two beater positions open. Let's start! Those trying for chaser, please stand up here!"

Helen, Ginny, and four younger girls stood in line.

"Let's have Sharon and Bethee have a go. Ron get up on your post."

The four shot up into the air but Sharon fell off her broom.

"Sorry Sharon. You need to be able to at least ride a broom before trying out. Get up here Allison!"

Katie flew forward with the other two girls behind her. She passed it to Allison who dropped it. Katie dived down to retrieve it and then tossed it to Bethee who caught it with both hands but spiraled in the air and let go to grab her broom. Katie kept this up for a minute but it wasn't going anywhere so she had them try to score goals. After six tries, Allison finally scored (because by that time Ron just stood in one place since Allison's previous shots were six feet off target) but Bethee still couldn't score.

"Sorry girls. Allison you stay for now. Get up here Juliet!"

The two girls working together did fairly better than before but they'd only scored three out of twelve tries.

"You two go down. Come up Helen and Gin."

That's where REAL Quidditch began. Katie, Helen, and Ginny made a great group. They didn't drop any balls and scored on most of their shots.

"Welcome back on the team Ginny. Congratulations Helen. You both made it."

It wasn't any surprise (their competition was nothing) but it was a good feeling all the same.

"I thought seeking was your thing gin." Katie noted.

"I prefer chasing." Ginny replied.

"What about you, Helen?"

"Quod captain."

"Makes sense. Quod players are like advanced chasers. Good. Ron, go defend the goal. Harry and I will act as another team's chasers. I want Sloper up here to try to take out Gin and Helen with the Bludger. Begin!"

Gryffindors did NOT have good beaters. Sloper missed the bludger and on his second try, he swung his bat backward and it knocked into Ginny. Kirke missed bludgers and fell off his broom. Dunike's bat flew in the air, narrowly missing Harry. Every one of the beaters who tried out were awful. That was...until Kevin.

"Sorry I'm late." Kevin panted, trying to catch his breath. "Lost track of time doing homework."

They expected Katie to be sore about it but her face lit up instead.

"No problem!" she exclaimed happily. "Ron, Helen, and Ginny are team A's chasers. Harry and I will be team B. Kevin...try to knock off team B."

Kevin soared into the air and did really well...although Ron was fuming since he seemed to be Kevin's main target.

"I'm sorry!" Kevin explained. "I don't want to hit a girl."

"What a gentlemen!" Katie beamed. "You're on the team!"

Neville pounded across the lawn.

"I'd like to try out." he said staring at the ground. The Gryffindor team was speechless. Neville? Play Quidditch? This was unreal!

"Uh...." Katie stammered. "Get up in the sky!"

Neville wasn't very good, he missed a few bludgers (but made up for it by using himself as a human shield for his team members) but he was better than the others and willing to sacrifice in order to be on the team.

"Okay welcome to the team, Longbottom." Katie wheezed as they all trooped back to the castle.

Gryffindor Quidditch Team:

Chasers-Kate Bell, Helen Cliff, Ginny Weasley

Beaters- Neville Longbottom, Kevin Relle

Keeper- Ronald Weasley

Seeker- Harry Potter

"I got it!" Neville piped excitedly. "I really did it! Gran will be so happy when I tell her!"

"Good job!" Harry said happily. "Good job."

Chapter 11: Surprises

Kevin paced back and forth in the entrance hall. It was a Saturday morning and he'd been waiting to talk to Helen about Hogsmeade but each time he was about to someone would interrupt them. That someone was Cho Chang. She'd been going jogging with them every other day that week. Why would that be so bad? Cho was smart...she was pretty...they were in the same classes...they had Quidditch in common...she seemed like a great girl...but she wasn't Helen. Helen is gorgeous, intelligent, athletic, funny, and sensitive, despite her strong exterior. He remembered the first day he'd seen her. She was sad...beyond sad really...beyond depressed if that was possible. She cut her hair super short, she wouldn't talk to anyone...in or out of classes...she hardly ate and she hid her face under gothic-like makeup.

*a/n: I know a few gothic people too so no offense to them either.

The death of her family was quickly tearing her apart. It was his sister's idea to befriend her. At the time he thought it was impossible. Every time anyone approached her she jinxed them. But that was the past. She'd changed since then. With the help of friends and Dumbledore, she'd become a completely different girl. The girl she was before her family's death. The girl she was meant to be, supposed to be. Since then their relationship grew and he started to understand the real Helen. He knew when she was lying. He knew when she was troubled or sad. He knew when she felt truly happy. He knew when she was hiding something. He basically knew her inside out and in knowing her...he started to fall for her. Hard.

Someone tapped his shoulder. He turned around.

"Now you see me!" Helen said exasperated. "I've been calling you!"

"Sorry. Lost in thought." Kevin explained.

"Hey don't worry about it. Ready for a run?"

"Actually I was wondering if we could talk."

"That's cool too."

"What a beautiful Saturday morning!" said a voice. Kevin sighed. It was Cho...again!

"Good morning Cho."

"Morning Kevin." Cho said, then added a few seconds later, "And you too Helen."

"I'm sure." Helen mumbled in a low voice. "I forgot...I've didn't finish my Herbology homework."

"No wait! Don't go!" Kevin blurted out.

"No that's okay." Cho said sweetly. "Doing homework is important."

Kevin saw Helen roll her eyes, cast him an apologetic smile, and walk in the Great Hall. Kevin resisted the urge to go after her, take her in his arms, and tell her how he really felt.

"I thought she had homework." Cho noted. "She just went in the Great Hall."

"I think I will too." Kevin told her. He turned around quickly and raced after Helen.

(After eating breakfast)

"We're going to Hagrid's." Hermione informed her. "Do you want to come?"

Helen saw Kevin shovel down the last of his oatmeal and get up.

"Let's go." Helen muttered quickly. She, Harry, Ron, and Hermione got up and trooped down the lawn to Hagrid's cabin.

"Been wonderin how long it'd take you-oh 'ello." Hagrid stopped, noticing Helen.

"She's alright." Hermione said.

"Righ'. C'min you four." Hagrid growled. They stepped in, after getting past Fangs and sat on the couch. He poured them all a cup of tea.

"So how's yer firs' week back been?" Hagrid asked.

"Aside from Snape docking points...good." Ron smiled. "Katie's gone Quidditch ballistic though."

"How's Grawp?" Hermione interjected.

"oh he's great. Been askin bout 'ermione a bit."

Helen had no clue who Grawp was but she didn't ask.

"An how've you been Harry?" Hagrid asked, concerned.

"Just fine." he said determinedly looking at his teacup.

"You didn't exactly let me give you a proper goodbye but I guess it's understandable."

Helen had no idea what they were talking about so she just leaned back and contemplated the mysterious issues in her own life while the others talked among themselves.

Was Cho trying to get with Kevin? Would Kevin want to go out with Cho or would he ask her out again? Her grandmother was wearing a necklace...was the necklace what the Death Eater girl was looking for? Where was the amulet now? What power could it possibly have that could make them want it so badly? Was she still in danger at Hogwarts?

"Goodbye Hagrid." Harry said. Helen snapped out of her daze.

"Yes. Bye Hagrid." Helen said, closing the cabin door behind her.

The months passed quickly. Aside from lengthy Quidditch practices, progressive Legilimency lessons, Dumbledore's Army meetings, piles of homework, afternoons in the library, and late night studying...Helen was extremely happy. She'd become really good friends with Harry, Ron, and Hermione and even closer to Kevin if possible, however the only downside was Bianca. She wasn't agreeing with the Slytherins but she wasn't exactly defending Gryffindors either. Helen understood though. It would be an understatement to say it was merely "hard" to disagree with the opinions of people whom you had to spend your time with 24/7. It wasn't until a week from Halloween that Dumbledore announced that she would be working with Professor Snape in Legilimency.

"WHAT!" Helen shouted. "TAUGHT BY *Snivellus*?"

"Helen," Dumbledore warned.

"But Alby!"

"You don't need my help anymore. All you need now is a bit of practice."

"Alby!"

He sighed.

"Reasons for you to work with Professor Snape, One: Improving and strengthening what you've learned by penetrating Professor Snape's mind. Two: Penetrating Harry's mind while he blocks it. Three: learning information explaining why the Professor is the way he is. Four: Informing Harry about your findings so that he can understand. Five: You'll be working with Harry and making his lessons more enjoyable. Six: I have some business to attend to."

"Alby!" she couldn't help but whine. "Oh all right."

So she'd agreed to have her first lesson with Snape and Harry on Halloween.

Helen smiled as she, Harry, Ron, and Hermione walked into the Great Hall for the Halloween feast.

There were real bats flying overhead, candles in pumpkins, and orange flamed streamers as decoration.

"Great isn't this?" Kevin asked Helen as she sat down next to him.

"Definitely. Well...except the bats."

After the feast Helen met up with Harry.

"Ready?" Helen asked nervously.

"Let's go." Harry answered.

The two walked in silence until they reached Snape's office.

"Close the door and have a seat." Snape commanded.

Harry shut the door and then pulled up a chair beside Helen.

"Now...seeing as Potter hasn't improved in Occlumency in over a year I believe, Miss Cliff, that you won't have any problem getting thoughts from Harry's mind. Get up both of you, wands out."

Helen and Harry stood up while Snape watched them.

"Wand out, Miss Cliff."

"Al...Professor Dumbledore doesn't allow me the use of a wand in Legilimency."

"Well you are under my instructions from now on so get out your wand! Begin!"

Helen whipped out her wand and pointed it at Harry.

"*Legilimens*" Helen said and waiting for something to happen but there was nothing.

"Well..." started Snape. "Considering that Potter is still standing I'm assuming that you were unable to penetrate into his mind. Really...I find anyone could."

Harry threw him a dirty look and Snape cast a cold smile.

"Begin."

"*Legilimens*"

Once again Harry just stood there and Helen frowned.

"Tsk. Tsk. I expected better."

"Well, sir, if I didn't use a wand...."

"Begin."

Helen unclenched her fists. "*Legilimens*" Nothing. "*Legilimens*" Nothing.

"For crying out loud!" Helen shouted. She put her wand back in her robes and stared into Harry's eyes. Suddenly Helen saw hundreds of Dementors...then a motionless body in a graveyard...

"No! No!" Harry's voice said. Helen turned her eyes away from his and noticed he was leaning against a desk.

"Nice Miss Cliff but why did you stop so soon?"

"He said he didn't want me to see anymore."

"And your point is?"

"I don't think I should be trying to penetrate Harry's mind."

"Why."

"He doesn't want it."

"Then he'll have to block you. Begin."

Helen looked into Harry's dazzling green eyes...Cho inches away from kissing Harry...Hermione getting hit with a spell...

"No!"

Helen closed her eyes and opened them again.

"Begin."

Sirius hit with a spell and falling backward.

"SIRIUS!!!!!!!"

Helen stumbled into Snape's desk as her own memories started swimming before her eyes. Her mother and father screaming in pain...her uncle covered in blood being tortured...

"NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO" Helen screamed.

Helen and Harry both fell to the ground.

"Well well well." Snape uttered. "Potter's first improvement in almost a year. Well done Cliff."

But Helen was still on the floor, eyes filling with silent tears. She got up and ran out the door without a second glance back. She kept running, pushing past people, until she finally reached the empty common room and sunk into the couch by the fire, where she started sobbing.

Harry's P.O.V.

The entire summer Harry'd tried to put Sirius's death in the past but in every Occlumency lesson he kept getting reminded of it. So much that Harry was forced to accept that it happened, although the thoughts never lost its painfulness. Tonight was different. He'd actually penetrated Helen's mind and what he saw wasn't pleasant. It had to be on the top ten list of most horrible things he'd seen.

Harry trooped slowly into the common room and was surprised to find it empty. Then he heard crying and looked over to the fire. Helen was curled up on the couch with her head in her hands. He didn't know if he should try making her feel better or leave her in peace.

"Helen." Harry said quietly.

She turned her head in his direction. Her eyes were red and her hair was in disarray.

"Helen, are you okay?"

She gave a sarcastic laugh.

"Sure, I'm just plain dandy!" She cried, sitting up. Harry sat down next to her.

"If you want to be alone then just say so and I'll go, okay?" Harry offered.

"Don't." she sniffed, trying to dry her eyes. "I'm sorry."

"What happened in your past?"

"I don't want to talk about it."

"I know it hurts, Helen, but you've got to talk about this with someone or it will kill you inside. Trust me...Dumbledore showed me that in my fourth year when Voldemort returned."

Helen looked at Harry with hopeless eyes.

"I...I don't know if I can."

"You can." Harry assured her. "Trust me."

Helen took a deep breath and started wearily.

"I had a great life. Had everything I wanted...got anything I wanted...loving parents...everything was absolutely perfect. I couldn't imagine a happier life. My father was a professor at Salem, while my mother worked in the Department of Mysteries."

Harry wished she hadn't mentioned the Department of Mysteries but then again maybe he'd ask her what she knew about it later.

"My father taught me magic at a really young age. So much so that he was able to pull a few strings to get me to start Salem early. My parents wanted me to be a good witch as much as I did. Anyway...a month before I was to start school...I came home from an outing with my uncle and..."

Helen put her head in her hands.

"My...my mom was lying there...shaking and screaming...and daddy...trying to reach out to her even in his own pain..."

Helen tried to speak and breathe between sobs.

"Then those...those bastards killed my parents."

Helen couldn't go on. Harry put an arm around her.

"Okay." Harry said. "Do you want to stop and go up to your dorm to rest?"

Helen shook her head.

"I wanted to run and help them. I tried. I tried as hard as I could but my Uncle held me back. He grabbed me and took us to his place. He thought we'd be away from danger..."

Helen tried desperately to continue.

"A week after the murder they came back while I was sleeping. I ran downstairs in time to see them perform the killing curse on my uncle...not after they bloodied him up so badly that I could barely recognize him."

Helen took a few deep breaths.

"I was alone. Completely alone. Both parents and only living relative dead. I didn't know what to do. I was sad. Alone. Afraid. Couldn't sleep...scared they'd come after me. I couldn't stay in the house any longer so I went to the one place where I knew I could get help. Alby. I spent the night on the streets somewhere and when I woke up...I wasn't with Alby. I was with my other guardian...Mrs. Baker.

Helen wiped the tears from her eyes. She looked up at Harry and saw surprise written on his face.

"Yes, Mrs. Baker is my other guardian. She took me to stay with her. I was completely traumatized. I don't even fully remember what happened. Mrs. Baker didn't know what to do...so she took me to St. Mungo's in England. That's where Alby came in. He wanted me to go to Hogwarts but she wanted me in Salem where she said I 'belonged'. In the end I went back to Salem with Mrs. Baker and well...I wasn't exactly Miss Perky. It wasn't until third year that I was 100% happy. During holidays I'd go to the summer home in Florida...Alby would visit whenever he could but I lived mostly with Sirius."

"Sirius!" Harry shouted in surprise.

"Yes." Helen smiled a little. "That made summers fun. He taught me new jinxes...gave me tips on Quidditch...told me stories about his adventures in Hogwarts...talked about you..."

"He did?"

"The way he talked it was like you were his son."

Harry smiled. So did Helen.

"I thought I'd dealt with the death of my parents...but tonight...seeing it all over again..."

"You can't get over something that big so quickly..."

Helen nodded sadly. Harry felt so bad for her. He knew exactly how she felt.

"You know...I haven't even talked about this with Bianca or Kevin...or even Alby. I mean they all *know* about it but I didn't discuss details with them."

Harry didn't know what to say anymore.

"Besides Voldemort killing your parents...the sorcerer's stone...chamber of secrets...finding out about Pettigrew's betrayal...Voldemort coming back to life and Cedric's death...what exactly happened?"

Harry didn't really want to discuss himself but after all that Helen told him...he felt obligated.

"I didn't know I was a wizard until I got my letter. I got thrown off my broom. I had to get the sorcerer's stone and met Voldemort. People thought I was the heir of Slytherin and school was against me. Found out I spoke Parseltongue. Discovered I had a godfather but couldn't live with him. Watched my parent's traitor escape justice. Fought a hundred dementors. Fought a dragon. Went underwater for over an hour. Watched Voldemort come back using my own blood. Faced expulsion. Had to go to a hearing. Entire wizarding world saying I'm a liar and like being center of attention. Watched my godfather die..."

"I think you might have left out a bit."

"Was that sarcastic or real?" Harry asked.

Helen just smiled and didn't reply.

"Thanks Harry."

"What for?" He asked, taken back.

"For making me feel better. Harry...there's a reason why I shouldn't get upset...hopefully you'll never have to find out why...but thank you."

She hugged him and then pulled away with an odd look on her face.

"What is it?" Harry asked.

"I just remembered...you and Cho..."

"Yeah." Harry answered.

"You were with her?"

"Me and a bunch of other guys."

"What?"

"She dated Cedric. Do you know-"

"I knew him."

"She dated him...then I guess you could say me...she had a thing with Roger Davies I'm guessing and then recently she was with Michael Corner."

"And now she's after Kevin." Helen finished. Then Kevin actually walked in.

"What's going on?" Kevin asked, sensing something had just happened.

"Nothing. Going to bed. Goodnight."

"GET OUT!" Helen screamed and sat bolt upright.

"Fine." Hermione said, turning around.

"No, no, no!" Helen shouted and grabbing hold of Hermione. "Sorry. Must have been yelling in my sleep."

"Nightmare? What was it about?"

"I...I don't remember now."

"Well hurry up and get changed and meet us in the Great Hall."

"Right."

In a few minutes she made her way to their table. There were only a few students in the hall.

"Don't most students sleep in late on a Saturday?" Helen asked. "Why aren't we?"

"Oh well." Hermione answered.

Helen reached out for an apple but Harry also grabbed it. She looked up at him and he worded "Are you okay?" and Helen's reply was a smile before taking the apple from him.

"Post!" Ron exclaimed. "Isn't it a bit early for that?"

"Those are Prophet owls." Harry noticed as one soared down and threw one in Hermione's lap. The four leaned close to each other and read.

NEWLY ANNOUNCED DEATH EATERS ESCAPE

As the wizarding community regrettably remembers, He-who-must-not-be-named has returned and has rallied the dementors to his side. So far this summer there have been twenty-three dementor victims. The main thing we need to remember is that there weren't any guards left in Azkaban, therefore the Ministry of Magic was forced to station ministry guards. Yesterday at midnight the Daily Prophet had been informed that all the remaining Death Eaters that had been captured have indeed escaped, not without the help of You-know-who and his followers. The Minister of Magic made a brief comment "The Ministry of Magic will do everything it can to ensure that the convicts are brought back to Azkaban."

We all have heard Cornelius Fudge's promises and they have yet to be fulfilled. A few days ago Fudge announced that he would be seeking help from foreign ministries. His discussions with them have yet to be reported.

DEMENTOR ATTACKS AGAIN

Claire Balaka and her family have had their souls taken by the Dementors. Claire was an official in the Department of International Magical Cooperation. The Minister of Magic planned to travel with Balaka and a few others in meetings with the foreign ministers of Magic, under Dumbledore's suggestions which the Minister is finally accepting, considering that it was Albus Dumbledore who attempted to inform the minister of the truth, that You-Know-who was back, for twelve months.

Fugde has, however, decided to postpone his own travel and instead will send other officials in the Department of International Magical Cooperation in his place.

MURDER OF ECHO SIREN

Echo Siren returned home from her job in the Department of International Magical Cooperation. She was to be the new head of that office because of Balaka's untimely demise; however she was never to get the opportunity. Others in her department are worried that they'll be the next targets.

"I'm thinking of retiring." says Herbert Mulplett. "I wouldn't want a job that jeopardizes my life and the lives of those in my family. I'm sure there are many who'd agree with me."

This is very bad news for the Minister of Magic. Without anyone in the Department of International Magical Cooperation he'll have to go himself.

"If it comes to that I'll send Percy Weasley, who would be perfect for the job."

Percy Weasley is Junior Assistant to the Minister and new High Inquisitor, as well as a former worker in the Department of International Magical Cooperation.

Many wonder if the Minister is too afraid to go himself.

"My job as minister is here. It isn't my task, but those in the Department of International Magical Cooperation." he stated angrily.

The wizarding world can only hope that whoever goes, seeks help. We'll need it.

"Stupid Sissy Fudge!" Helen spat. "Anyone can see that he doesn't want to risk getting killed so he's sent others to instead."

"I know." Hermione answered thoughtfully. "Voldemort doesn't want us getting help from other countries."

"But we will won't we?" Ron asked.

Helen and Hermione looked at each other.

"Maybe..." Helen mumbled.

"Helen means no." Hermione said. "I'm sure Voldemort has supporters in more countries than just Britain. The other ministries will be busy too. They won't want to help us and risk becoming bigger targets."

"Great." Ron muttered sarcastically.

"What about the U.S.?" Harry asked Helen.

"They're going to beef up their own security...besides... Voldemort has plenty of supporters there, remember? I got taken by them before and my family was killed by them."

"Killed?" Ron yelled in shock. "You didn't tell us that!"

"I said they died and that was all I needed to tell you at the time." Helen said with a twinge of anger.

"Sorry." Ron whispered.

Helen shrugged.

"I should have told you and Hermione."

They looked at Harry.

"She told me last night...but only because I accidentally pulled it out of her memory during Occlumency."

"You improved!" Hermione shouted. "Wow! That's great Harry!"

He smiled.

"So what are your plans today?" Helen asked.

"Don't you remember? Hogsmeade..."

"Oh."

"Umm...Hermione and I...er..." Ron began.

Helen's eyes grew wide. Was there something going on with Hermione and Ron? Now that she thought about it...Hermione had just a few nights ago had a talk with her about Ron and Harry but Helen had gotten the feeling Hermione preferred Harry, even though Hermione and Ron had been spending a lot of time in the common room alone together. The whole thing was weird.

"What?" Harry asked.

"Well Hermione heard some girls talking about Madam Puddifoot's and well...I know how you had a bad experience in there so I thought that Hermione and I would go and then meet up with you and Helen at Three Broomsticks."

Helen laughed.

"In other words...you guys would like some time alone and-"

"No!" Hermione and Ron shouted in union.

"Alright! alright!" Helen said, laughing even harder. Then someone tapped her shoulder.

"Helen..." said Kevin, "Can I have a word?"

"Okay." she said getting up.

Helen and Kevin were strolling along the grounds and then sat down next to the lake.

"Ummm. What do you think of Cho?" Kevin asked.

This wasn't the topic Helen hoped they'd talk about.

"She's okay I guess..." Helen said in an unconvincing tone.

"What's wrong with her?"

"Nothing, nothing."

"You're lying."

"I know."

"Well then what's wrong with her?"

"Why do you ask?"

"Ummm...." Kevin started nervously, "She was really upset last night."

Helen didn't like where this was going.

"And?" she asked.

"She was crying about Cedric."

"Still!!!" Helen shouted in shock.

"What do you mean still?"

"She's been with three other guys since Cedric. You'd think she'd find condolences since then."

Kevin frowned.

"It can't be easy for her!"

"I'm sure it can't."

"You don't seem to think so."

"Who cares what I think. What about Cho?"

"I was planning to ask you to Hogsmeade. You know I -"

"Ready to go?" Cho called from across the lawn.

Kevin looked at Helen with a guilty expression. Now she understood.

"So to comfort poor Cho you agreed to take her to Hogsmeade."

"Right." Kevin mumbled.

"Well go then. Have fun." Helen said, getting up. Kevin grabbed her arm.

"Are you okay with it?"

"Sure. Why wouldn't I?" Helen said a little loudly. "Go on. Have fun."

"Helen!"

Helen didn't answer. She just kept walking until she reached the entrance hall where Cho was standing. She tried to walk around her but Cho got in her face.

"Hi Helen!" she said a little smugly.

"Move bitch." Helen said, pushing past her and smiling satisfied at the horrified look on Cho's face.

"Where do you want to go?" Harry asked as he and Helen made their way through Hogsmeade.

"Honeydukes!" Helen said gleefully as she noticed the sign in a window.

"Good choice." he laughed. They walked inside and Harry pointed out some of the good sweets.

"There's Coconut Pice...I haven't really tried it yet. The Honey toffees are good. Nougat Cremes are Neville's favorite. Then of course there're Every Flavor Beans and Sugar Quills."

"Wow! Look at all those types of Chocolate!"

It was a while before Helen finally decided on what she wanted and they paid for their sweets. They strolled along and Harry stopped at Zonko's.

"Do you want to stop in there?" Harry asked.

"It's up to you. I already have plenty of things from Fred and George."

"You do?"

"Bought from them about a week ago by owl. They even sent me some Love Truth squares."

"What are those?"

"You give them to someone and they'll tell you who they like. I'm guessing combination of truth serum...from the feathers of my Jobberknoll...and love potion...made from frozen Ashwinder eggs."

"You won't try it out on me will you?" Harry joked.

"Hmmm. Good idea!" Helen kidded before getting an excited look.

"Are you really planning on doing that?"

"No! Not that!" Helen laughed. "Look ahead!"

There was a new addition to Hogsmeade business. An outdoor restaurant/cafe/dessert shop.

"The Adolescence" Helen read.

"How about it?"

"Let's check it out."

As soon as they stepped forward a witch in magenta robes appeared.

"Welcome to The Adolescence." she said brightly. "For lunch you can go inside the shop. For anything sweet you can find a seat at a table under the umbrellas."

Harry looked at Helen.

"Sweets?" she worded. He nodded. They found a table and sat down. A wizard in plum colored robes appeared then.

"What would you like?" he asked. They picked up menus.

"Rainbow Cone." Harry said.

"Rainbow Freezer." for me.

He nodded and snapped his fingers as the treats appeared.

"For a galleon you can order Cryptic Case."

Helen tossed him two galleons and he conjured it up and disappeared.

"Wish they wouldn't Disapparate like that." Helen complained.

"Yes. Makes you wonder how they got the stuff so fast. So what exactly is Cryptic Case?" he asked, staring at the weird cookies arranged around a smoking goblet.

"They have them in Carna." Helen explained. "It's pretty cool actually. After you finish eating some kind of rainbow sweet the people at the table take a cookie and dip it in the goblet. Then they exchange with the other people around the table and eat the cookie. Then they look in the goblet. If lucky the people will be able to see something important."

"Did you ever see anything?"

"Out of the five times I've tried...once. It was only of me as Quod captain and Kevin as Quidditch captain."

Harry nodded. They continued talking about different things until they finished what they were eating.

"Ready?" he asked her, staring at the smoking goblet.

"Sure."

She picked up a cookie and so did he. Following her lead, Harry dipped his cookie in the liquid and it turned from brown to bronze.

"Er..."

"Shhh."

They swapped cookies and then ate them before peering into the goblet. Harry couldn't help feeling a little stupid staring into the swirling grey mass trying to see something. He gave up and pulled his head away but Helen gasped and yanked his head back in time to see...

A girl with black hair, wearing an ancient crown and revealing clothing had her back turned. She turned to the front but her well defined eyes were looking to her left.

She was tall with a very developed body. Her hand swung at her side and she grabbed a lance that had just been thrown in her direction. As her gaze changed to her right side a triangular scar showed on her neck. She appeared to be calm while talking to a shirtless man who'd just attacked her.

BANG. Harry and Helen were knocked backward and fell into their chairs. Harry looked up and saw a black cloaked person walking away with the goblet. Helen jumped up and started to run after them.

"Helen!" Harry yelled. He got to his feet and smacked straight into Cho.

"Don't go yet, Harry." she said.

He hesitated. Should he go after Helen or stay with Cho. What if Helen got hurt?

"So you're dating Helen now?" she asked, sitting in Helen's seat. Harry's thoughts broke.

"What?"

"You're dating Helen." she repeated.

"Who said that?" he asked, sinking into his chair.

"No one. Kevin and I were in Madam Puddifoot's and we saw your friends. They said they didn't know where you and Helen were. We decided to get some fresh air so we were walking by and saw the two of you kissing-"

"WHAT!" Harry shouted.

"Well your heads were together."

"We were looking at something!"

"Uh huh...each other... well Kevin went to the bathroom but I was around long enough to catch Helen running off. You make her cry too, Harry?"

"No!" he said indignantly. "She went after the person who took what we were looking at."

"I'm sure."

"What are you doing here?" Helen asked coldly.

"Just leaving." she said, seeing Kevin come her way. "Tootles."

Helen sat back down grumpily.

"You know I was so close to just tipping the chair over with her IN it!"

"You got it." he said.

Helen slammed the empty goblet on the table.

"Clumsy fool tripped and all the liquid fell out."

"Helen...that girl in the Cryptic Case...was you."

Helen looked directly into his eyes and shook her head.

"No. But I think I know who it was."

"Well that's weird." Hermione said thoughtfully as Harry and Ron came back with their drinks, in Three Broomsticks. Helen lifted her glass to her lips.

"What IS that?" Ron asked.

Helen was the only one who hadn't ordered a butterbeer.

"A Mad Muggle." Helen answered. "If I hadn't had ice cream I would have ordered a Frozen Muggle. A Frozen Muggle is just a Mad Muggle that's been frozen."

Hermione, Ron, and Harry just stared at her.

"What? It's really good!" she defended.

She and Harry were in Three Broomsticks minutes before Ron and Hermione came in. They could tell that all possible Ron and Hermione romances in the future were NOT going to happen. Hermione even admitted to Helen while the boys were getting drinks that she and Ron both felt awkward in a room with couples making out all over the place and agreed that maybe it was best that they remain strictly friends. Harry and Helen told them what had happened but Helen wouldn't explain who the person in the goblet was.

It was about time to go. After they paid for their drinks, Helen led them towards the door but then stopped. Ron bumped into Hermione, who bumped into Harry, who bumped into Helen, who was staring in a booth. Inside that booth was Kevin and Cho, lip-locked. Helen walked past as though she didn't notice anything and went out the door with Harry, Hermione, and Ron on her heels.

After putting her Honeydukes sweets away, Helen climbed down the dormitory stairs and into the common room.

"So...did you have fun with Harry?" someone asked as she put her hand on the door.

"What?"

"Nevermind. Of course you did." Kevin nodded.

"Sure. I had fun with Harry AND Ron and Hermione."

"No. I was asking if you had fun with just Harry."

"What are you talking about?" she asked angrily.

"Cho said Harry was a good kisser. What do you think?"

"How the heck would I know?"

"Well you did at the Adolescence."

"WHAT? Have you had too many butterbeers or something?"

"You know exactly what I'm talking about...with your heads close and-"

"Close because we were overlooking a Cryptic Case you moron!" she shouted. People in the common room turned to look, including Harry, Ron, and Hermione. This wasn't the best place for an argument considering that everyone was in there.

"Oh so I'm a moron now?"

"No! You're a jerk!" Helen yelled. "You and your 'I'm only going with her because she's sad' bit!"

"THAT WAS TRUE."

"Oh so you kissed her because she was sad huh?"

Kevin stepped back in surprise.

"You saw?"

"Busted aren't you!"

"Well I only did it because I was mad that you were kissing Harry."

"WHICH I WASN'T! MAYBE IF YOU JUST ASKED INSTEAD OF ACCUSING ME LIKE I'M SOME CRIMINAL OR SOMETHING, YOU'D KNOW!!!"

"Cho told me you were mean to her."

"SO what!"

"You don't have any right to do that!"

"That slut has been trying to sink her claws into you the entire time we've been here!"

"DON'T CALL HER THAT!"

"I CAN CALL HER WHATEVER I DAMN WELL PLEASE!"

"NO YOU CAN'T"

"WATCH ME!"

"Listen, Helen! I won't let you go upsetting her! She's in a fragile state."

"Oh no surprise there! Now that she realizes the "sad girl" trick works on you of course she'll be using it all the time now! Someone better carry around a box of tissues for her!"

"STOP!"

"NO! Just leave me alone Kevin! If you're willing to throw away a five year friendship for a two month tramp then just stay the hell away from me!"

Helen grabbed the door and stormed out of it.

Chapter 12: Roaring Lions

Helen barely knocked on Dumbledore's office door when it swung open.

"Have a seat." he said gravely.

She sat down in the chair across from his desk.

"So you've seen her." he said, "In the Cryptic Case."

"You didn't tell me!" she shouted.

"I already told you that you needed to find out at the right time."

"So that woman...who looked exactly like me...she was Princess Eumaria."

"Correct."

"So my grandmother was planning on going to find her ancestor's treasure."

"Oh at the time she didn't know it was her ancestor."

"Alby...please...I need to know more."

Albus thought a moment and then placed the pensieve on the desk but then withdrew it.

"Alby!"

He raised a hand to quiet her.

"It will take too much time so I will tell you most of what she told me..."

Helen nodded.

"Jonathan and Anyanka made plans to go by boat to Egypt. What Anyanka didn't know at the time was that Jonathan was a wizard."

Helen looked up in surprise.

"He knew they'd need as much help as possible if they were to fight the demons, spirits, and witches he knew they would encounter. That's where I came in."

Helen smiled.

"The three of us finally made it to Egypt. We met a few other travelers who joined our team...with the help of Anyanka's visions..."

"Visions?" Helen asked.

"Yes. Every night she'd start talking in her sleep. She never knew of course, until much later. Anyway, we finally reached the No Longer Lost Palace of Eumaria. We had to fight all sorts of things you'd never even dream of. Finally at the last battle...Jonathan and Anyanka found the room with the widow's veil. One problem: legend. Anyone who went inside never came back out again. They sat in that room wondering what to do when Anyanka noticed a carving on the wall...it depicted Princess Eumaria wearing an amulet. The same one Anyanka had. She wanted to go in but Jonathan didn't want her to. While in their travels they read that Princess Eumaria herself died because she didn't realize that while she possessed the amulet...she herself couldn't go beyond the veil. The amulet protected her from the Tepso curse but that was all. The Princess would have to send someone else beyond the veil. She did not know this and she became lost."

"Great." Helen muttered sarcastically.

"At that moment one of the travelers burst into the room. They had wanted the treasure all for themselves. They tried to steal the amulet and in doing so...they were tossed beyond the veil."

"So if someone tries to steal the necklace...they died...er...went 'beyond the veil', so does that mean that Anyanka would have to give the necklace to someone willingly?"

"Yes." Dumbledore smiled. "Anyanka took the amulet and placed it around Jonathan's neck. The moment she did that...her skin started to turn grey."

"What?"

"She was an Erium remember? As Princess Eumaria's descendent, and being in Egypt...the amulet protected her from Tepso but when she took it off it caused her to get Tepso. This meant that Jonathan had no choice BUT to go beyond the veil and get the cure...and possibly the treasure."

"Why couldn't she just put the amulet back on?"

"Doesn't work that way. All part of the magic curse."

"Yeah, okay why does this ancient stuff always have to be so complicated?"

"Anyanka doesn't know what happened beyond the veil while Jonathan was gone...but Jonathan said that the spirit of Eumaria made him make a choice. The treasure...or the cure."

"Well since I'm here today I'm guessing he took the cure."

"Exactly."

"So what happened after that?"

"They got married. Had a daughter...your mom. Lived happily ever after."

"You mean that's the end of the story?"

"Yes."

"So where do I come into this whole thing?"

"You are the descendent of Princess Eumaria and Anyanka."

"What happened to the amulet? Where is it?"

"That is for you to find out."

"So...were Voldemort's followers...did they kill my family because they wanted the amulet?"

"Probably."

"Did my mom and dad know about the amulet?"

"Yes but they couldn't touch it. Your mother wasn't a Sacred Keeper. They killed her after realizing that."

"A what?"

"Sacred Keeper; someone with the sacred mark; someone who was born to protect certain sacred items."

"So Eumaria and Anyanka were?"

"Yes."

"Well I'm not...I don't have any sacred marks and I have no clue where the amulet is. But wait... you said Harry would have something to do with this. What does Harry have to do with this?"

"That's what you'll have to find out. Now...go to bed. You have a Quidditch match with the Slytherins tomorrow."

Helen nodded and left.

Helen finished pulling her hair into a strategically messy ballerina bun and sat down at the table. A few minutes later...

"Eat up! Eat up!" Katie commanded her Quidditch team. She walked over to Helen and dumped eggs, bacon, and toast on her plate.

"Eat!" she yelled.

"Why don't you tell Harry that?"

"Because he's at least eating toast while you're just drinking pumpkin juice!"

"Well hey...this gross stuff is filling me up just fine."

"Pumpkin juice isn't gross!" said Ron.

"We're in for some tough weather." Katie said, glancing at the ceiling. Indeed it was foreboding weather but Helen was in a good mood, mainly because she'd get to murder the Slytherins in Quidditch and in doing so, vent the steam she'd gotten from her fight with Kevin. She knew she had to watch her anger. Muggles had problems with high blood pressure...but hers was worse than that. In a way it was worse than how Veelas turn into fire throwing birds when angry. Helen reached into the pocket of her robes and pulled out a bar of Honeyduke's chocolate.

"That's not good for you this early." Hermione warned.

"Trust me, Hermione. It is." She said.

"Ready to lose?" came a drawl behind them.

"Yeah we were about to ask you that." Harry replied coolly.

"You can't possibly win with *Longbottom* on your team. Gryffindors must really suck if they had to resort to him!"

"Shut up, Bobo."

"It's Draco!" he said testily. "I'd watch out if I were you, Helen. Longbottom will probably take a swing at your head, mistaking it for a bludger. You'll have to borrow one of those helmets from the mudblood."

"Geeze, Draco that whole 'mudblood' bit is *really* getting old. I mean it would totally seem like a disgusting word if you hadn't used it...I don't know...about a hundred times!" Helen replied.

"You-"

"And I mean..."she said cutting him off, "Dirty blood...oh no! I'm so offended! You said I had dirty blood! Oh boy! I'm just going to die I am! You said I had dirty blood! Isn't that just a humdinger and a tumtigger to boot! Only wizards and witches could make up such a stupid statement to mean something horrible."

"You-"

"Now I know..." she cut him off again, "that you'd say it's the *feeling* behind the word that makes it bad and well...guess what...I'm not going to be brought down by such a stupid supposed insult as 'dirty blood'. I'd be more offended if you'd said I look like you. Grow up, Dreeko."

Draco just stood there open-mouthed and then turned around and left the Great Hall, muttering "It's Draco...and I was referring to Granger as a mud—er—muggle."

"Well..." Katie said, "Let's go team. Let's win this!"

"Yeah! Give the Slytherins a tumtigger!" Ron shouted.

In the locker room Katie had everyone take a seat.

"Listen you guys..." she started, "This is deadly weather. We need a quick catch of the snitch to win this game. Did everyone do the Impervious Charm?"

They all nodded.

"We have three great chasers. Two unbeatable beaters. A superb seeker. And a good keeper. Now let's get out there and prove that we can win this!"

They all cheered and made their way to the Pitch.

"Welcome students to the first Quidditch Match of the Season where it's Slytherin vs. Gryffindor!" said Bianca.

Harry caught Helen's eye and she smiled. Perfect goodluck omen.

"Too bad Lee Jordan can't do commentating." Ron sighed. "He always made it funny."

"Shake hands!" Madam Hooch ordered to Katie and Bletchly.

"The whistle blows and the balls are in the air!" Bianca announced." Gryffindor in possession. Bell dodges a bludger thrown by Nott. Pass to Ginny Weasley. Back to Bell...no taken by Baddock. Passed to Pritchard...No! Stolen by Cliff! Gryffindor possession. Pass to Bell. Weasley. Bell. Score.

10 to 0. Slytherin in possession...ouch! Knocked in the back of the head by Gryffindor Beater Relle. Slytherin still in possession as Baddock caught Zabini's fallen Quaffle. Baddock heading straight at Gryffindor Keeper Ron Weasley. He's about to throw...Ouch! Knocked out of his hands by a bludger launched by Relle. Gryffindor in possession."

The wind picked up and the rain poured in floods. Thunder rumbled and lightning flashed across the sky. Harry tried desperately to try and catch a glint of gold. He flew around searching.

"That makes it 20 to 10 Gryffindor's lead. Slytherin in possession OoO Zabini drops it. Weasley down the field. Yikes! Crabbe's Bludger misses Weasley but hits Bell but the quaffle is knocked out of Baddock's hand and caught by Cliff. She's making her way down the Slytherin end. Dodges Goyle's fist and passes to Weasley. Score. 30 to 10. OoO foul! Weasley knocked off her broom by a surprise bludger to stomach. Wow! She's caught by Cliff. Will you look at that! Cliff using one hand to

steer and the other to hold onto Ginny Weasley! And Ginny is now safely on her broom...yes but Bell scored. 40 to 10. Slytherin Possession. Pritchard has the Quaffle. Beater Longbottom straight ahead. Ouch! Longbottom fails to hit bludger away and is hit! Almost fell off his broom. Pritchard shoots...sco...no saved! That was a foul! Keeper Ron Weasley is out! Zabini used his wand to knock Ron off! The time out is called."

Harry landed and rushed to Ron's side. Luckily Helen pulled another one of her...catching-someone-as-they're-falling tricks but Ron was hit with a Stunner. Helen was kneeling at Ron's side until Professor McGonagall rushed over and sent him to the Hospital wing. Harry as well as the other Gryffindors were beyond furious.

"The whistle is blown and the players are back into the air. Bell takes the foul shot. Woah! That was one forceful throw! Blocked by Nott but almost incapacitates him. 40 to 10 still. Gryffindor lead. Zabini has the quaffle. Taken by Cliff. Cliff speeds to Slytherin end. Foul! Gross! Her hand is bent weird now. Cliff still managed to hold onto the Quaffle long enough to pass to Weasley who scores. 50 to 10."

Harry saw Helen pull out her wand and mumble something. Her hand straightened and both the hand and wrist was wrapped in a cast of some sort. Harry had to find the snitch before anyone else got hurt badly.

"Woah! Baddock is out of the game! He's struck by lightning. OoO this is dangerous weather and dangerous players! Zabini tries to steal and Cliff knocks Zabini in the head with a Quaffle. She's going for the goal...she throws...Nott flying to meet her! Gryffindor score...NOTT! He tried pushing her off her broom! She's off! Oh! Isn't that ironic! Weasley catches her by her good arm. Hahahaha oh my gosh. Is that a foul? I think that's a foul. Weasley swings Cliff into Pritchard..."

Harry saw the snitch! He sped forward but unfortunately it was against the wind whereas Draco was going with the wind and was closer. Harry flattened himself on his broom. His firebolt hadn't failed him yet. Just a little bit faster....it was too late...Malfoy reached a hand and...

"Harry Potter catches the snitch. Gryffindor wins 200 to 10."

Malfoy had been about to touch the snitch when suddenly he flew sideways and Harry's fingers closed around the snitch. He flew to the ground. The Gryffindors' cheers erupted across the stands. The team was hugging each other, covered in mud, rain pouring on their head, but none was happier than Neville. Turned out that Neville knocked the bludger into Draco's ribs and sent him flying.

"YOU DID IT!" Katie screamed as she caught Neville in a bear hug.

"We won! Yes! We won!" Helen screamed. She hugged Harry and then turned around to hug...but then stopped. It was Kevin but her happiness overtook resentment and she hugged him as well. Hermione came running towards them.

"Good job, Harry!" she cheered, kissing him on the cheek. He felt his face redden.

"Let's go tell Ron the good news." Helen said immediately.

"Filch will kill us if we go in like this." Harry answered. Let's go into changing room and then head for the hospital wing."

"No. Miss Cliff, go to the hospital wing now. Your wrist needs healing." said Professor McGonagall with a smile.

"Oh yea...forgot." Helen realized. She defied McGonagall's orders and headed to the changing room anyway to wash away the slick mud in her hair, robes, and everywhere else.

"*Ferula.*" Helen mumbled as she re-put the wrap on her hand and wrist.

"Thanks for the save." Helen thanked Ginny as she tried drying her hair with one hand.

"Thanks too. No more stalling. Hospital wing now!"

The Gryffindor Team made their way up the castle and into the hospital wing.

"We won didn't we?" Ron grinned at the smiles on everyone's faces.

"How are you?" Katie asked, concerned.

"Fine. Madam Pomfry says I can leave soon."

"Good. I expect you to be at practice on Tuesday." she said before walking out.

Kevin laughed. Helen frowned.

"Great job blocking those quaffles." Ginny said.

"Thanks. So how did the ending go? I saw Malfoy led in here. Madam Pomfry's with him now."

They all laughed and told him about Neville's correct aim and Harry's catch.

"Out now!" Madam Pomfry said, pushing them along.

"But Ma-OWWWWWW." Helen screamed. Madam Pomfry had pushed Helen and her bad hand flew forward and hit the wall. Madam Pomfry made a surprise "oh" and steered Helen to hospital bed next to Ron.

"Nice bandaging." Madam Pomfry said as she took it off and mended her wrist and hand. "You and Mr. Weasley can go now."

"What happened to Malfoy?"

"Broken ribs."

She shooed them both away and Ron had to support himself on Helen's shoulder as he was laughing hysterically.

"Serves Malfoy right." Ron muttered. "After all the horrible things he's done and said...and especially after making fun of Neville...look what happened!"

"Yeah Helen is definitely with Harry." came Bianca's voice.

Helen froze and Ron stopped beside her.

"She told you?" Kevin asked.

"No but I can tell when my best friend likes someone." Bianca said.

"Great..." Kevin mumbled. He opened the door and was in such a rush that he didn't notice Ron and Helen jumping behind it. When Bianca came out Ron tried to hold Helen back but she slipped past his fingers.

"WHAT WAS THAT?" Helen screamed at Bianca.

"You were listening!" Bianca yelled.

"HOW DARE YOU! YOU KNOW HOW MUCH I LIKE KEVIN! WHY WOULD YOU GO TELLING HIM LIES ABOUT HOW I LIKE HARRY?"

"You're so naive, Helen!" Bianca shouted. "You never once noticed how much *I* freaked out when I saw Kevin! You never noticed how *I* daydreamed in class thinking about him! You never noticed how much *I* suffered watching the two of you together! Did you honestly think I wasn't attracted to him? My God Helen! Unlike *you* I'd liked him since the first time I saw him, so don't you think *I* deserve to be with him? No of course not! It was always about how much *you* liked Kevin! You never once asked if *I* was interested in him!"

"You didn't tell me! How was I supposed to know? I can't believe you! You expect me to lay off a guy that I didn't even know you liked?"

"It's your fault if you didn't notice!"

"How DARE you blame me?"

"You can have Harry, so why not leave Kevin for me?"

"First of all I DONT HAVE HARRY! Secondly YOU SHOULD HAVE TOLD ME! THAT'S WHAT FRIENDS ARE FOR AND OBVIOUSLY YOU DON'T KNOW THE MEANING OF THE WORD! THIRDLY You betrayed me! No matter how much you like Kevin, you had NO right to tell him lies! That is such a Slytherin thing to do!"

"NEWSFLASH! I AM A SLYTHERIN SO GET OVER IT!"

Ron put a hand over her mouth before she could reply and pulled her away from Bianca and didn't let go of Helen until they walked through the portrait hole.

"I am so sick of my friends being so...UGH!" she screamed.

Ron just stood there not knowing what to do. Kevin rushed forward.

"What's going on? Did you have a fight with Cho?"

"NO!" Helen screamed. "NO I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING TO YOUR PRECIOUS CHO!"

"Listen Kevin, what Bianca told you wasn't true. That's why Helen's so mad right now."

"Why would she be mad?"

"She doesn't want you thinking she likes Harry" "Because it's a lie." Ron added.

"Why does it matter so much that you'd fight with your best friend?" he asked Helen.

"Because I liked you!" she said defiantly.

"Liked?"

"Yes! Past tense! Liked before you went and had a kiss fest with Cho!"

"It was nothing!"

"Yeah that's what YOU say! Whatever. Who cares right?" she said before storming up to her dorm.

"Begin." Snape instructed. Helen and Harry were in their Occlumency/Legilimency lessons before Christmas break.

Helen stared into Harry's eyes and saw Hermione getting hurt...Sirius hit with a spell...

"STOP!" Harry yelled.

"Potter!" Snape said angrily. "Don't start this nonsense again! Get up and start over!"

"All this time you haven't told me how exactly I'm supposed to be doing this." Harry muttered just as angrily.

"You aren't concentrating enough." Snape spat.

"Well it's kinda hard when someone's constantly probing your mind!"

"Well then you're just weak, Potter! You're weak if you can't take a little pain!"

"You don't know anything about pain!" Harry shouted.

"Oh don't I? You know...you'd think the death of your godfather would be enough to make you work harder. Clearly deaths of others isn't important enough for-"

"DON'T YOU DARE MENTION SIRIUS AGAIN! IT'S YOUR FAULT HE'S DEAD!"

"Oh really, Potter? If I'm not mistaken *you* were the one who didn't try hard in your earlier Occlumency classes."

"I WOULDN'T HAVE GONE TO THE MINISTRY IF YOU HAD GIVEN ME A SIGN THAT YOU UNDERSTOOD WHAT I WAS TELLING YOU!"

"I couldn't blow my cover with Umbridge!"

"To hell with Umbridge! Cover isn't important when it comes to Sirius! But of course you wouldn't give a damn! *Snivellus*."

Professor Snape went white with rage and whipped out his wand, as did Harry.

"Don't!" Helen screamed. "You are a Professor!"

"Let Potter make his first move! Then it will be self-defense!" Snape snarled.

Helen stepped between the two of them and pushed their wands away from each other.

"Let's go Harry." Helen beckoned.

Harry just stood there staring coldly into Snape's eyes.

"Harry...c'mon." Helen almost pleaded. She took him by the arm and threw the door open.

"Don't come back for Occlumency, Potter. EVER. You're on your own now."

Helen pulled Harry out the door and back to Gryffindor Common Room.

"I know. I know." Helen assured Harry as he stood pacing back and forth in the common room, face red with anger.

"I mean...that ass has been pushing it since day one! I'm so sick of him-"

"I know." Helen said soothingly. "You're doing a really good job keeping it together. He *wants* to irritate you. Don't let him."

"You don't know what it's like to have someone trying as hard as they can to make your life miserable! No one's ever hated you!"

"I wouldn't know about that..." Helen mumbled.

"Yeah right." he said sarcastically. "Who hates you?"

"Bianca."

"Are you kidding me? She's your best friend."

"*Was*. Turns out she's been after Kevin and has totally trashed our friendship because of it."

"Oh come on!" Harry sneered. "That's just a stupid girl squabble over a guy! That isn't the end of the world."

Helen frowned but then put on a look of tranquility.

"I never said it was the end of the world. Just right about now she hates me."

"No she doesn't! Something as retarded as that doesn't ruin friendships! God! I wish I had problems like yours."

Helen, still with a calm, collected, expression....

"You're upset. Totally understandable."

"SHUT UP! YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND! NO ONE CAN POSSIBLY UNDERSTAND! YOU SOUND JUST LIKE DUMBLEDORE!"

Helen jumped up.

"No...I couldn't understand what it's like to have Voldemort after you...No...I couldn't understand what it's like to have Voldemort kill your parents. No...I couldn't understand what it's like having people think you have a screw loose and that you are dangerous! No! Only YOU would understand."

Harry felt ashamed of himself for taking his anger out on Helen. She did know how he felt. Voldemort's followers had kidnapped her and killed her family, but what did she mean by having 'a screw loose' and 'having people think you're dangerous'?

"Helen...what did you mean by that last part?"

"Huh...oh. Oh."

"What? What is it?"

"Nothing."

"Tell me!"

"Forget it."

"TELL ME!" he shouted, picking up a book and slamming it on the ground.

"Go ahead." Helen shrugged. "Keep doing that. There're your books."

"YOU'RE JUST LIKE DUMBLEDORE!"

"Thank you." Helen smiled.

"DON'T SMILE!"

"Harry..."

"DON'T 'HARRY' ME! I COULD HAVE CURSED SNAPE! YOU STOPPED ME!"

"I stopped you from making a big mistake! You could be expelled for doing that to a professor!"

"I DON'T CARE!"

"You do."

Harry started picking up everything in his sight and throwing it all over the place.

"Okay Harry. Calm down! Calm down!"

He just ignored her and continued.

"Harry!"

He wasn't listening. He wasn't paying any attention. He was going to destroy anything in his path.

"HARRY!"

She had to stop him. He was going to get into serious trouble if he kept destroying everyone's things.

"Reparo!" she kept shouting at everything, trying to fix them. "Harry stop!"

She grabbed him by the shoulder and shook him a little.

"Get a grip! Look at me! Look at me Harry!"

She made him look into her eyes.

"I know you're hurting...but you've got to take control of yourself!"

Helen stood there, composed and together while Harry was still trying to control his breathing.

"Now...help me fix all the stuff you've demolished." she ordered, reaching into the pocket of his robes and extracting his wand. He reached out to take it and she was about to hand it to him before thinking against it.

"You sure you can handle carrying a wand without ruining anything else?"

He turned a bit red and nodded that he was capable. They spent ten minutes turning the disaster room back to the way it was supposed to be, which was good because everyone was trickling into the common room from their dorms. It was their last night before vacation began. Harry and Ron would be at Grimwald Place. Hermione was spending Christmas with her parents at her Aunt's house and Helen would be staying with Dumbledore at Hogwarts.

"Bye you guys!" Helen waved as Hermione, Harry, and Ron left the Entrance Hall. They'd be taking the Hogwarts Express out. Helen sighed. She couldn't help thinking how lonely Christmas was going to be. All her Gryffindor friends were gone and Bianca wasn't exactly on speaking terms with her...she'd gone to Salem for the holiday anyway. Helen had no idea if Kevin was still there but she still hadn't gotten the courage to face him. She felt bad after not giving him a chance to explain or anything and she'd snapped at him for no real reason. If he liked Cho that was totally his business. She'd just have to deal with it. Friendship was the most important thing. She'd always told herself that. On the positive side now that her friends had gone she had the chance to go to Hogsmeade and buy them proper presents.

Helen hugged her coat close to her and decided to go to Three Broomsticks.

"What would you like?" Madam Rosemerta asked kindly.

"Guess it's too cold for a Frozen Muggle." Helen laughed.

"How's a butterbeer sound?"

"Great." Helen smiled.

She paid for the drink and started walking towards an empty table.

"Hey, Cliff. Over here."

Helen raised an eyebrow. It was Draco sitting with Crabbe, Goyle, and Pansy. She gazed suspiciously at them but decided to go see what they wanted. Bad company was better than no company...at least...she thought that was how the saying went.

"Have a seat." Draco invited.

"No room." She noted. Draco waved a hand and Crabbe gave her his seat. Again, Helen eyed Draco suspiciously but sat down anyway.

"Hey Pansy..." Helen started. "I never mentioned how great it is to see that Madam Pomfrey fixed your face and hair. I mean after that potion Goyle made and spilled on you...we Gryffindors had our doubts."

"Whatever." Pansy replied sourly.

"I was just wondering why you'd still be here after the Wonder Trio left." Draco drawled.

"I have my reasons. What about you, Malfoy? Surely your family would be missing you enough to actually *want* you to visit, especially on Christmas." she said taking a sip of her drink.

"What of your family?" Draco asked only slightly ruffled.

"Oh they're on a vacation of their own, per say. Gone really." she answered. "I wouldn't want to be where they are."

"Nicely put. Well, Helen. I for one am glad I stayed. I'm in the presence of two gorgeous girls."

"Cheers." Helen said, tipping her mug.

"Cheers." he smiled. They both drank, not taking their eyes off each other for a second. It was really weird...the false formalness...drinking with the enemy...

"Hey Helen!" Katie hailed. "Have a seat here."

"Well boys...and...girl...I think...I guess I'll be seeing you." she took her butterbeer, gave them a wave and sauntered away. Good. She'd dined with a foe and made it back without a scratch, something truly amazing these days. Helen took a seat beside Katie, facing two seventh year boys Helen hadn't met but she thought they were Hufflepuffs.

"Great to see you." Katie told Helen.

"I thought you'd be away." Helen admitted.

"Yea well...I met Devon and well...I thought I'd stay." she confided, glancing at the shorter of the two.

"He's no *Kevin* but he's super nice." Katie mumbled under her breath.

"Hi." said the taller boy. He was pretty cute...good build with curly blond hair and dimples. He reminded her as an older and hotter version of cupid (without the baby fat of course)...Okay maybe the cupid comparison wasn't such a good idea.

"I'm Joseph Stilna" he introduced.

"Helen Cliff." Helen answered.

"I know who you are." he smiled. Boy was he cute. "Those were some moves you pulled at that Quidditch match!"

"Thanks." she blushed. "Do you play Quidditch?"

"I'm the new Keeper." he grinned.

"That was my position at Salem."

"Really? What a coincidence."

"Tell me about it."

"Tell you what?"

"Nothing, it's just an expression."

"So how do you like Hogwarts?"

"It's great. Actually...a little part of me always wanted to go here. I've read *Hogwarts, A history* and I can tell you...it made Hogwarts sound so exciting...don't get me wrong. Hogwarts IS exciting, but I lived in the US so I couldn't exactly go here."

"I see what you mean." he nodded.

Helen was really happy. So far she'd managed to spend over an hour without being alone. After they'd finished talking and drinking Katie and Devon said they were going to Madam Puddifoot's.

"That place is *really* popular with the older students." Helen noticed.

"Want to come?"

"No thanks. I've got Christmas Shopping."

"Suit yourself." Katie said as she and Devon left.

"I still have a few gifts to get...mind if I tag along with you?" Joseph asked.

"Sure." Helen said, not even trying to conceal a grin. "More the merrier."

The two walked down High Street.

"I know this really nice little shop that has random items that are perfect as unique presents."

Around the corner was a tiny place called "Peeperz". They went inside and were greeted by the storekeeper.

"Welcome."

"Aloha."

"Have a look at those books."

Helen nodded and her gaze went past a row of books and stopped on one entitled *Ancient Magic*.

"There's one I'm sure even Hermione hasn't read." Helen said, picking up a copy. "OoO and look at those Chudley Cannon robes! I'm sure Ron would love it! All I'd have to do is put a little charm on the back with his name and it would be complete. Hey...what's that?"

"Hmmm. Don't know." Joseph replied. "It has a description on the back."

"I'll get it...oh and that too...and that..."

Helen picked up the things she was going to buy and brought it to the counter. She turned around to say something when she noticed...Cho. Make that Cho with Kevin in a corner.

"What?" Joseph asked, seeing her expression.

"Uh...nothing."

Cho turned around at the sound of Helen's voice. Helen decided she wasn't going to get upset so she gritted her teeth and faked a smile. Cho picked up a bottle of perfume and walked over to the counter.

"Fancy seeing you here." Cho mused. Helen ignored her and snuck a peek at Kevin. He didn't seem too pleased to see Joseph for some reason.

"Helen...can I have a word?"

"Hmph. I guess."

Helen walked over to a corner with Kevin.

"Helen what are you doing with that guy?"

"Excuse me."

"Are you hanging with him to get me jealous?"

'WHAT! No! He's the friend of a friend. I cannot believe we're having this discussion. Listen, I have to go pay for my stuff. See you."

Helen walked back to the counter and purchased what she wanted. She'd gotten out of there as quickly as possible and tried not to think about it when she and Joseph went to the Adolescence.

After that they went to a few more shops and then headed back to Hogwarts.

"So what was up with that guy?"

"Who?"

"That guy in Peoperz."

"Nothing. Just...nothing."

"You can tell me." Joseph said kindly. Helen looked into his eyes and then noticed for the first time that his eyes were purple. I mean actually purple!

"Your eyes..."

"Contacts." He said smoothly. Helen had a bit of an uneasy feeling. There was only one person she knew who had purple eyes and that was someone she'd pushed out of her mind for good.

"So what was that book you got?"

"Oh." Helen pulled out the book. "Ancient Magic."

Joseph had an unreadable look on his face. Helen suddenly felt she was treading on dangerous waters. Just to be safe...should she probe his mind?

It couldn't hurt to try right? I mean what harm could it do? Helen stared into his eyes and the first vision she saw was enough to make her jump backward and break contact.

"Woah!" Joseph said, rubbing his head. "Flashback."

Helen tried to mask her fright quickly. She had to get to warn Dumbledore immediately. Joseph was no Hogwarts student.

"Oh crap!" Helen yelled.

"What is it?" Joseph asked.

"Professor Dumbledore...he wanted to see me in his office at this time." she lied.

"Why?" Joseph...or the imposter...said in an edgy tone.

"My detention. I...I yelled at Professor Snape."

"I'll walk you to his office."

"No!" Helen shouted. "I mean...I have to make a stop in the Gryffindor Common Room first because I have to show him the...assignment. I got detention because I was angry that Snape marked me low. I have to show him how good it was and the unfairness of it all."

"Well...okay." he said in an almost creepy voice. Helen was struggling not to freak out.

"Bye." Helen ran.

"Wait!" he boomed, grabbed her arm and pulling her tightly to him. Could he know she knew who he really was?

"I really have to go-"

He tightened his grip on her arm, but she wriggled free.

"Sorry." she gave a false smile and ran as fast as she could.

Helen was out of breath by the time she reached the common room. As soon as she saw Kevin she ran over to him, almost collapsing.

"Kevin!"

"Oh now you're talking to me."

"Omg Kevin! Joseph! He's...he's-"

"I don't want to hear it!"

"No! He's not-"

"You don't get it! I don't want to hear about your date with-"

"WILL YOU FORGET THAT!" Helen screamed. She felt like she was going to cry.

"Why should-"

"It's Neil!" She cried.

"Who the hell-"

"Neil! The guy who helped kill my parents!"

"How could-"

"He is! I'm telling you! We've got to go warn Alby!"

"Listen okay...he couldn't be here at Hogwarts, alright."

"KEVIN! Believe me okay? He's here! Oh God! He's here. He's gotta be here to get me too."

"You're tired. You-"

"Forget it! I was wrong to come to you for help!"

Helen ran. Her worst fears were coming true. Neil was back. He was going to kill her like he killed her family.

Neil was the son of a family friend. His parents died mysteriously and he didn't have anyone left so Helen's parents took him in. Turns out he was working with Voldemort's followers...yea...at the tender age of twelve he helped murder her family. Even worse...Helen had been friends with him before everything happened. Perhaps that's what made her feel so betrayed when it came to Bianca. Having someone turn on you is an awful feeling.

"Pepper Imps!" she yelled, almost jumping through the door.

"Helen...what..."

"Alby!" Helen wailed. "Neil!"

He stood up.

"You know this...how?"

"L.....Legilimency." she panted. She was trying to breathe. She hadn't felt like this since her talk with Harry after that first horrible Legilimency class with Snape.

"Besides...his eyes. His eyes were-"

"Violet." Dumbledore finished. "Helen...this is very important. I need you to relax."

"H...how..."

"Helen. Your health and life depends on you staying calm. I must go. I wish Fawkes was here..."

Dumbledore mumbled more to himself than Helen. "Already on a mission..." Dumbledore added before exiting his office. Helen tried to follow Dumbledore's suggestions and calm down but this was all too much for her. Everything horrible that ever happened to her started flashing before her eyes...she couldn't breathe any longer...she'd die. She was going to die...

Chapter 13: Adds Up

Dumbledore POV

Dumbledore waited in silence on the fifth floor of St. Mungo's Hospital. Maybe Helen wouldn't have needed to be there if he'd stayed with her instead of going after Neil. He could have forced her to fight it. No... there was nothing he could have done.

"Professor."

He turned around. A Healer called him over to where she was standing.

"Good day...night. Good evening Professor." she said.

"Evening, Sesame."

"I hoped we wouldn't be meeting again. That would mean bad news for Helen."

Dumbledore knew what she meant. Helen had been in Mungo's for the same reason before. She had Salucidi then and it was still with her now.

"What stage is she in?"

"The first. Hopefully she'll come out of it and we can try preventing her from lapsing into Salucidi again."

"Is there anything we could possibly do for her right now?"

"No. Professor...with all due respect, perhaps I should refresh your memory on what we are dealing with. Please follow me into my office."

(Once inside the office)

"Professor, Salucidi is a...a disorder...a very uncommon and deadly disorder. Only twelve cases were ever reported in history and only one has survived it so far."

"Helen's mother."

"Yes, Butica was the first. We'd been close with the Craw twins. Anyway, there is no cure to Salucidi. There is only the hope that the patient has enough will to live."

Salucidi patients undergo the three stages before death. We can only help them after they've awakened after the third stage to prevent them from going to the fatal fourth."

"The first stage is anger."

"Right. The inflicted would go into a murderous rage."

"Second deals with deep despair in the subconscious."

"Right."

"In the third the patient would wake up but be in some sort of trance."

"Correct. That's when we try awakening them. We give all sorts of potions in the hopes that they'll be filled with happiness long enough to fight Salucidi on their own, for it is they themselves who fight it. If they choose death over life...the body shuts down and they do indeed die."

"So the effort involved in staying alive would be similar to fighting the Imperious Curse. Will power."

"Except harder."

Dumbledore sighed. He'd taught Helen to fight the Imperious Curse but that wasn't enough. Under the curse, if he'd asked her to do something that would jeopardize her life or embarrass her she wouldn't do it but if it was something she herself would do in her normal state she'd do it.

"Go back to Hogwarts, Professor. Your students need you."

"I have to be here for Helen."

"Come back Christmas Eve."

"That's in four days."

"I know. She'll be in the third stage then."

Dumbledore nodded and turned to leave.

"Professor..."

"Yes."

"Bring anyone close to her with you when you return."

"Will do."

"Professor..."

"Yes."

"She's not her mother. Butica didn't have the same pain Helen has. This isn't the first time Helen's been in Mungo's but hopefully...this will be the last."

Harry POV

It was Monday night. Harry had long finished dinner and was playing wizard's chess with Ron.

Hermione was on the couch talking with Ginny. Once again, Hermione had cut her holidays with her parents short.

"Knight to E5." Ron laughed. "Check mate, mate!"

"Good game. Play again?"

Ron's answer was drowned out by Mrs. Weasley's shout.

"Beds all of you."

They admitted they *were* tired but they were reluctant to get up from the living room, past Mrs. Black's now quiet portrait, and go upstairs for bed. As they reached the staircase there was the sound of the door opening. They looked at each other questioningly. No one was due to come in that late. Who could it be? They put a hand over their wands just in case and walked cautiously by the door.

"Professor." the heard Mrs. Weasley exclaim.

"Forgive me for startling you. I knew better than to ring the doorbell at this time of night."

"It's no problem."

"Are Ron and his friends asleep?"

"We aren't." Harry said walking in with the rest of them. Harry noticed that Dumbledore looked even older than usual.

"Have a seat." Mrs. Weasley offered.

"No thank you, Molly. I won't be staying long." He looked at each of them.
"Helen's in the hospital."

"What!" they all shouted.

"How could this happen? What's wrong with her?"

"She has Salucidi." Dumbledore said quietly.

"Oh gosh."

"What's that?" Ron asked.

"Oh Ron! It's horrible!" Mrs. Weasley cried. "Only a few people ever had it and they all died!"

"All except...one...Helen's mother."

"Well then that's good right?" Mrs. Weasley asked. "I mean that means she can too."

"The Healers are unsure. They don't know much about the disorder."

"We'll go to St. Mungo's right away." Mrs. Weasley said immediately.

"Not yet, Molly." Dumbledore said. "She hasn't gotten to the crucial stage yet. Perhaps...on Christmas Eve if you aren't too busy...you and the others would like to visit for a minute or so."

"Of course we would." she spoke for everyone in the room. "The poor dear."

Dumbledore smiled and left. Harry shook his head in confusion.

"What exactly is Salucidi?" Harry asked Mrs. Weasley.

"Well...you know all those people who are so sad that they kill themselves?"

"Helen commit suicide!" Ron shouted.

"No, no, no." Mrs. Weasley said quickly. "Well not yet."

"Not yet!"

"Listen first!" Mrs. Weasley shouted. "Salucidi is a condition where a person can become so stricken with grief that if they wanted to die...they could actually make themselves do it."

"But Helen wouldn't do that."

"I wouldn't know about that, Harry. If you'd had all your worst memories replayed over and over in your head for days...I'd think it would be very tempting to take the easy way out and give up."

"But it can't be worse than dementors."

"Harry...dementors you can use the Patronus Charm and it goes away. A few seconds of sadness tops. I'm talking *days*. That's why only one person's lived."

Harry frowned. Why didn't Helen tell him? He thought she'd told him everything that night...but wait...

"She told me." Harry mumbled.

"What?" Hermione asked.

"Helen told me about it. She'd let it slip how some people used to think she was unbalanced in the head and dangerous. She said there was a reason why she shouldn't get angry."

"So you think she was talking about Salyousidd?" Ron asked.

"Salucidi"

"Whatever."

"So what percent chance does she have of living?"

Hermione thought a moment.

"Scientifically...or whatever the wizard term...17% chance. But under the circumstances...10%"

This left none of them in a cheery mood. How were they supposed to have a good Christmas when their friend had a ninety percent chance of dying!

"Up to bed." Mrs. Weasley mumbled.

It took them all a while to get to bed and it proved to be a long restless night.

Helen Trance POV

Her mother was dead. Her father was dead. Her uncle was dead. Bianca and Kevin wanted to murder her. Voldemort and his followers were attacking her. Everyone was against her. Everyone wanted her to die. She was heartbroken. She was torn apart and ripped in shreds. She should die. She would die. She had to die. She was supposed to die. But she wasn't dying. Why?

Albus: Helen.

Helen: Alby! You're here! You're going to rescue me!

Albus: No. I cannot help you. Only *you* can do that Helen.

Helen: What's the point of living? I'm just dying inside anyway.

Albus: Helen.

Helen: Yes.

Albus: Harry needs you.

Helen: No he doesn't. No one needs me. They're better off without me.

Albus: Harry needs your help. He's hurt too. You have to survive. You have to help him.

Helen: Go away.

Albus turned. He left her to brood on her sadness. End her pain! End it now!

Yes. She wanted to live. But how? No one could help her. She needed help. Could someone help her? Would anyone help her?

Mrs. Weasley, Moody, Lupin, Harry, Hermione, Ron, and Ginny walked down the hallway, outside a door where Kevin was standing alone. He was wearing all black (a little bit of grey) and on his shirt were the words "Major Jerk" which obviously meant his clothes reflected what he was feeling.

"Hi." Hermione said. "You alright?"

He only shrugged his shoulders and stared at the floor. Must be hard on him; liking someone who was in a very bad condition.

"Will you five be okay alone? We're going to go get some tea." Mrs. Weasley said. They nodded. As they left they heard some shouting from inside.

"Who's in there?" Ron asked.

"Dumbledore and Mrs. Baker." Kevin mumbled.

"What's going on?"

Ginny pulled out a few extendable ears.

"Anyone fancy finding out?"

"No!" Hermione said immediately. "It's Dumbledore you all are planning to listen to!"

No one seemed to pay any real attention to what Hermione was saying.

"What if it's about Helen's condition? He wouldn't mind if we listened in."

Reluctantly she listened in using the Extendable Ear.

"She is going back to Salem where she belongs!" came an angry voice.

"Salem is no longer for her." said Dumbledore.

"Who says? We'll just have to add some extra protection. Besides...England is the real danger! You-know-who is there!"

"Voldemort can easily travel to the United States as his followers did in August."

"Well at least at Salem she didn't have another Salucidi attack!"

"Mrs. Baker...I assure you...Hogwarts is the best place for her."

"NO! SALEM IS! Her friends are there! I am there! I know what's best for her since I am her guardian!"

"You're not her only guardian."

"Helen is unhappy here! Her condition proves it! She's leaving this place A.S.A.P!"

"Perhaps...we will let Helen decide."

"IF SHE EVEN LIVES THROUGH THIS!"

The door flew open as they all stepped back to let Mrs. Baker past. Her face was red with rage. Dumbledore stood at the foot of Helen's bed, holding a bag. He motioned for them to come in. The room was completely bright. There wasn't a single black or grey thing in the room. The walls had a few pictures and rainbows pained on it.

"I'm sure...if Helen were awake she'd thank you for coming."

Helen looked dead. Her face was pale and her body seemed a lot smaller than normally. The oddest part was seeing her (blinking a lot slower than most people) staring at the ceiling with no emotion under her usually sparkly eyes.

"Healer Sesame is waiting for her last words."

They looked at each other...clearly clueless on what Dumbledore meant, except Hermione.

"I spent yesterday looking through our Defense Against the Dark Arts book...under the dark afflictions and I read on Salucidi...limited information really...and when you say 'waiting for her last words' do you mean the last thing the patient says just before either waking out of their trance or...dying."

"Right you are, Hermione."

They were all very quiet. This was serious. This was really serious. As soon as she spoke...they'd know if she would live...or die.

After a few minutes...

"Maybe you all should get some tea." Dumbledore advised. "It may take days for her to wake."

They turned to go...but...sheets were stirring. They spun around. Helen faced a picture of a rainbow. Her eyes fluttered for a moment and then an angelic song came from her mouth.

"Ginny...get Mrs. Baker quickly." Dumbledore said very fast. Ginny ran out.

"Why are there so many songs about rainbows? What's on the other side?

Rainbows are visions, but only illusions. Rainbows have nothing to hide.

So we've been told and some choose to believe it, but I know they're wrong. Wait and see. Someday we'll find it. The rainbow connection. The lovers. The dreamers.

And me."

Mrs. Baker burst in the room and ran to Helen's side while Ginny stayed back with the others.

"Who said that every wish could be heard and answered?

Who wished on the morning star?

Somebody thought it up, and someone believed it.

And look what it's done so far.

What's so amazing that keeps us stargazing? What do we think we might see? Someday we'll find it. The rainbow connection. The lovers. The dreamers.

And me.

Oh the sundering spell. We know that it's probably magic..."

A tear rolled down Helen's cheeks and she continued singing in the same sweet voice.

"Have you been half asleep? And have you heard voices, as I've heard then calling my name? Is this the sweet sound that calls the young sailors?"

The voice might be one in the same. I've heard it too many times to ignore it. It's something that I'm supposed to be. Someday we'll find it.

The Rainbow Connection. The lovers. The dreamers. And me.

La-de-da-de de-da-da la-de-da-la-de-da-do"

"The song her mother sang to her as a little girl." Mrs. Baker whispered, crying.

Helen's song ended with its last soulful note. She turned to all of them and smiled.

Helen POV

Helen blinked a few times to let her eyes adjust to the bright room and then smiled weakly. Then suddenly Mrs. Baker had her arm around Helen and was sobbing.

"Tori!" Helen said, surprised. "I'm okay. Honest."

"No you aren't! You'll never be fine as long as you are away from Salem."

Helen noticed Dumbledore mention something to Ginny and she returned with Healer Sesame.

"How are you feeling?" she asked as she pulled out a bar of chocolate and handed it to Helen.

"Happy now." Helen replied, patting Mrs. Baker on the shoulder.

"Eat that up." Sesame instructed. "There're a lot more things you'll have to take afterwards."

Helen nodded. Mrs. Baker started pulling herself together.

"Sesame...Helen can't afford to get Salucidi anymore."

"I know." the healer agreed. "Helen, you'll have to take better care of your stress levels."

"No! Helen needs to go back to Salem, doesn't she?" Mrs. Baker shouted. "She wasn't suffering from it there."

"Well...that seems like the case but-"

"See, Albus! See!" Mrs. Baker shouted. "Helen will come back to Salem."

"But there's no real proof that says going to Salem will relieve her of pain."

"Helen! You do want to come back to Salem right?"

Helen hadn't been expecting this. Go back to Salem? Could she really do that? But why would she want to? Well...she'd be away from Kevin and Bianca...she could continue her life just being friends with Sabrina and Harvey. No. Alby said he wanted her there. She looked up into his face, seeking an answer to her question but his expression was unreadable...even to her.

"You want to go to Salem, right?" Mrs. Baker repeated.

Helen saw all of them staring at her.

"My God!" Mrs. Baker shouted. "Helen! Your parents wanted nothing but to get you to our school! If they wanted you in Hogwarts they would have put you there themselves!"

"No!" Helen yelled. "They wanted nothing but for me to be happy!"

"You were happy at Salem!"

"I'm happy at Hogwarts too."

"Then why are you in the hospital!"

Helen sighed and popped the chocolate in her mouth, chewing slowly, to give herself some time to think. She wanted to stay. To fix her friendship with Kevin. To soothe things out with Bianca. To stay with Harry, Ron, and Hermione...her new friends. Besides...she was with Alby and that meant she would be safe. But wasn't she close to dying a few minutes ago? Wasn't Neil back...ugh. Neil. The name gave her shivers.

"Helen isn't going anywhere until I give the okay so lighten up!" Sesame ordered. Helen smiled gratefully.

"What's today?" Helen asked.

"Christmas Eve." Hermione answered.

Helen rubbed her head. She'd been out for five days!

"This needs to be resolved first!" Mrs. Baker said, shaking. Helen hadn't seen her so worked up.

"Decide, Helen."

Helen stared at Albus.

"Hogwarts."

Everyone smiled or grinned except Mrs. Baker who looked like she'd gotten slapped in the face.

"What about me Helen!" Mrs. Baker cried, getting up. "What about me!"

"Tori!"

Mrs. Baker rammed between Kevin and Harry and out the door. Helen groaned and sunk into the bed sheets. Great! Now Mrs. Baker was mad at her too.

"May I have a word with Helen." Dumbledore said quietly.

The others turned and left. When they were alone, Dumbledore drew a chair beside her bed and sat facing her.

"When are things going to be normal?" she asked her guardian. "Trust me...I like a little excitement...but frankly...this is not the kind of excitement a girl enjoys."

"I agree." Dumbledore nodded. "Do you believe Hogwarts is safer than Salem?"

"Alby you know as well as I do that anywhere I go I will be in danger...until...until everything gets resolved."

Dumbledore's eyes twinkled mysteriously.

"Why do Voldemort's followers want the amulet? What good would it do them? The widow's veil surely must be destroyed by...Oh my God! Alby! If my grandmother found the widow's veil then doesn't that mean it's still around?"

"Ah. Very good question Helen."

"You know the answer, Alby! So they want the amulet so that they can go beyond the veil...but why? Aside from the treasure..."

"What exactly is the widow's veil?" Dumbledore hinted.

"A gateway to the...oh....my...-"

"To the dead." Dumbledore finished. "Hmmm. Wonder why they'd want to be able to walk between the worlds of life and death."

Helen thought for a second.

"So they might try think of a way to bring people back to life...but they can't without the amulet. Besides...only people who wear it can enter and exit."

"That's what Eumaria thought, therefore that is what legend says."

"Eumaria should know right? She made it!"

"She did not."

"Then who-"

"Samusotepso created the veil so naturally he'd be the maker of the amulet and he gave it to the Princess. Who's to say it doesn't have secret powers only he knew of."

Helen groaned.

"How do you know this?"

"Let's just say...Samusotepso didn't leave the world without fathering a child first, same as Eumaria."

"You mean there's a possibility he has descendants?"

"Just one."

"Who?"

"That is for you to figure out."

"Rrrrr."

"Anything else you'd like to address?"

"Yes. Can his descendant touch the amulet as well?"

"No. Only Eumaria's true heir."

"Where's the amulet right now?"

"I do not know."

"Augh. As frustrating as it is...that could be a good thing."

"How."

"Then the heir couldn't give it to them even if they wanted to. Hey, you always say Harry has something to do with this. What is it?"

Helen suddenly thought of something.

"Alby! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE! YOU CAN'T LEAVE THE SCHOOL WITH NEIL ON THE LOOSE!"

"He is no longer on the grounds."

"Regardless! He could return and you wouldn't be there! Please go and keep Hogwarts safe so I can go back. Besides...eight hundred lives are more important than just mine."

"And your life is important for the hundreds of thousands in the wizarding world."

"What does..."

Dumbledore smiled and disapparated. Helen scowled at Dumbledore's ability to avoid questions.

"Can I come in?" said a voice.

"Sure Kev." Helen said sitting up.

He took Dumbledore's seat in the chair.

"I just want to say sorry."

"For what?"

"For being such a jerk." he said pointing to his 'Major Jerk' shirt. "Exactly what it says."

"You're not." Helen assured. "I'm sorry too. I guess jealousy got the better of me. I wish you and Cho the best of luck."

"Helen-"

"No, I mean it."

"no but I-"

"Maybe it's for the best." she said. "Best that nothing except friendship happened with us."

Kevin stared open eyed.

"But I wanted it to progress."

"So did I but you can't change the past. And think...you're in your last year. You and Cho can work together, while I'm still in school, without any guilt or anything."

"Helen...the way I feel about Cho...I can't see going past friendship."

"So? You guys already act like it...just without the title."

"Title?"

"Bf/gf title. All you have to do is say 'yes' to the 'are you and Cho an item' question and you'll be official and trust me bud...I support you."

Kevin had mixed expressions (relief but sadness...what a combo!) on his face.

"You're the best friend a guy could have."

Helen smiled. For some reason...saying she didn't mind Kevin being with Cho...well...it wasn't tough anymore. In fact she felt good. She'd gotten her friend back, and to her...that was way more important than the thrill romance could give. Her eyes fell on a bag that was beside the chair. Alby had that bag didn't he?

"Can you hand me that?" she asked Kevin.

"Sure."

Helen peeked in a saw that it was filled with presents and there was a note.

"Dear, Helen." she read. "I figured you'd want to hand out these presents to your friends. I've wrapped them for you. Alby."

Helen stared at Kevin.

"How'd Alby get them? They were in my dorm."

"No they weren't. You dropped them in the common room after telling me Neil was...oh and I'm sorry I didn't believe you." Kevin whispered.

Helen leaned over, gave him his present, and hugged him tightly. Who said friends couldn't have benefits? After they drew apart, Helen asked that he let Harry in.

"One last question....are you with Harry?" Kevin questioned.

"Does that really matter?"

"No...I guess not."

"You aren't going to give us another scare are you?" Harry asked her as he came in and Kevin went out. He stood in front of the chair but didn't sit.

"I'll try." Helen smiled. "Hey Harry...how are you going to repel Voldemort with your mind?"

Harry sighed. He honestly didn't know. Voldemort wouldn't use the same trick twice.

"I don't think it's all that necessary anymore." Harry mumbled.

"Okay." Helen nodded. "But...Harry...you wouldn't happen to know..."

What was she supposed to do? Ask if he knew anything about her family or the amulet or what he might possibly have to do with her life? Okay so they both had the same parental (or lack of) issues and the same misfortune of having Voldemort wanting them dead. They also had unsettling times with Cho, and a deep rage towards Slytherins and people associated with the dark arts (except Draco in Helen's case...for some reason she didn't hate him seeing as he hadn't done anything horrible to her). They had wild tempers on occasion. It would make sense that he'd have some impact on her life right? But how exactly could she find out without having to answer the many questions she herself just learned answers to.

"Wouldn't happen to know what?" Harry pressed.

"If I'll be able to leave by tomorrow?"

"Definitely not!" Sesame said as she walked into the room joined by Mrs. Weasley, Moody, Lupin, Hermione, Ron, Ginny, and Kevin. "In fact say goodbye to your visitors."

"But it's Christmas Eve!" Helen simpered.

"We'll come back tomorrow." Mrs. Weasley promised, patting her head.

"Don't worry. I'll visit you when I'm allowed." she said as they trooped out.

"Harry." she called. "Here's your present. Can you pass out the rest in this bag on Christmas morning?"

He smiled and without thinking gave her arm a gentle squeeze and closed to door on his way out.

Chapter 14: Normal Twist

It was January and about two weeks since Christmas break was over. Things were normal for Helen at Hogwarts but the toughness of the work stepped up a notch. They were making complex antidotes in potions, studying Augreys and Chizpurfles in Care of Magical Creatures, and in DADA...countercurses for complicated curses. During the time they'd usually have Legillimency and Occlumency, Helen and Harry would spend between one and two hours practicing on each other. Helen's Legillimency skills stayed the same but Harry successfully blocked Helen's probing a few times, to Helen and Hermione's delight. In Herbology the sixth years were studying Pine Stranglers, in Transfiguration they were reading about Human transformations. History of Magic was about the darkest wizards and witches of past times. Lastly in Charms they were learning how to do the Imperturbable Charm.

Helen was happy. Nothing bad had happened, nor had there been any bad news in the Daily Prophet, aside from four muggle killings. Helen and Kevin's relationship was repaired and improving even more. Nothing went wrong...except maybe a small confrontation she'd had with Cho.

Helen was walking from dinner, minding her own business.

"Cliff." Cho called. Helen turned around.

"Chang."

"Parkinson just told me you're still trying to sink your claws into Kevin."

Helen rolled her eyes. What was up with Pansy? Was she still bitter about the small provoking in Three Broomsticks? Or was it because Draco was paying less and less attention to her?

"And you believe her?" Helen asked incredulously.

"I've got good reason!" Cho shouted. "You hated the fact that *I* got him and *you* didn't!"

"Just drop the subject." Helen yawned.

"Not until I make this one thing clear...Kevin is *MINE* so stay away from him!"

"As if you could do anything." Helen jeered and turned away. "You're Head Girl remember?"

"Exactly! I could report you!"

"For what?" she scoffed. "Ignoring the baseless ranting of a paranoid girlfriend?"

Then the Slytherins decided to circle around the two of them.

"Hang on...Chang and Relle are an item?" came a voice from the back. The Slytherins stepped aside to let Draco pass.

"Yes actually." Cho replied.

"And here I was under the impression that Relle and Helen had a thing going on."

"See!" Cho shouted, lunging forward. Helen stood unnerved. Cho was about to wrap her hands around Helen's neck when Kevin appeared out of nowhere and pulled Cho off.

"What were you doing?" Kevin shouted.

"She's after you!" Cho yelled.

Kevin turned to Helen, whose arms were folded across her (ample) chest.

"What's going on?"

"Your girlfriend's gone mad that's what!" Helen murmured.

"I Guess Relle preferred the shorter version of Helen, cause that's what Cho is." Draco gibed.

"That's insulting, Draco." Helen grumbled.

"Ah...I'm Draco now. Not Dreeko or Draken."

"Actually I've never called you Draken but I'll remember that next time." she retorted.

"Who cares!" Cho yelled. "What's going to happen to Cliff?"

"I'm going to bed, that's what." Helen said walking away before anyone could say anything.

February was the Hufflepuff and Ravenclaw Quidditch match. To Helen's great pleasure Ravenclaw won. This would mean it would be Gryffindor vs. Ravenclaw in the final match that would take place in May. Katie was going out of her mind and scheduling longer Quidditch practices which lead to too frequent all nighters, late night studying, and homework being completed at the last minute.

Helen rubbed her eyes. She and Kevin were the last ones in the common room. Hermione, who didn't have Quidditch, finished all her homework and both Harry and Ron had fewer classes than Helen.

Kevin was in 7th year and the poor guy had even more work than Helen so after she did her homework she tried to help him with his as much as she could. It wasn't until three in the morning that they were done.

"Thanks, Helen." he groaned. "God I'm tired! Things weren't this bad at Salem."

"Yeah and then we had two separate practices."

"No jogging tomorrow morning."

"Good. I wasn't planning to."

"Hey...I'm sorry bout Cho." Kevin apologized.

"Nah. Don't worry about it. I'd probably do the same thing...except I wouldn't have been so kind as to give a warning in advance."

"I believe that." Kevin laughed. "Nobody ever messed with a guy you liked."

Helen sighed.

"What is it?" he asked.

"Help me up." she moaned. He got up a bit shakily to his feet and extended a hand. Then he walked her up to the girl's staircase and then they said goodnight.

That's what happened sometimes on those late nights, although there was that strange time the day before when she was in the library and her fingers were killing her from writing so much and then Draco came and...

"I can fix that." Draco said.

"*You*" she laughed. "Umm...aren't you better at inflicting pain?"

"Don't be stubborn and accept help while I'm feeling generous." he said, taking her tired hands in his warm ones. Helen was surprised. She somehow expected him to have freezing cold hands. It was hard to remember he had blood in his veins instead of ice. He massaged both her hands for a bit and it hadn't to be the weirdest thing. Draco Malfoy...Draco Malfoy (Death Eater's son, who's father was friends with people who wanted to kill her) helping out a Gryffindor (and a friend of Harry Potter no less) and helping in THAT way?

"There." he said. Helen looked at her now tingling fingers and moved them about. She couldn't feel any pain at all. Draco really was good with his hands. Helen looked up and saw him walking out of the library. She figured it was for the best. At least it avoided the awkwardness of thanking him and admitting that it actually felt pretty good.

Helen yawned all the way into the Great Hall. She plopped down at the table and realized that she was so late that post had already come.

"What's in the Prophet?" Helen asked. She noticed that Hermione, Ron, and Harry had odd expressions on their faces. She pulled the copy out of their hands and read.

Minister of Magic's Abrupt Change

The Daily Prophet has been notified that the Minister of Magic has decided not to seek foreign help which we so desperately need. The minister says quote

"Our Ministry members are being killed. I have been informed that none of the other ministries would want to help us in the first place. The magical world has our assurance that we will do whatever we can to make sure that you-know-who and his bands of followers are put to justice."

More news on page 6

Helen threw the paper down in disgust. It was too good to be true that the rest of the year could possibly go uneventful. Trouble was brewing again. Things were about to happen soon. She could feel it. Later that day, when she had her first day free of Quidditch practice and homework, she went to talk to Dumbledore while Harry, Ron, and Hermione went to visit Hagrid.

"Hello." Dumbledore said. Helen could tell he looked troubled.

"Fudge isn't getting help. Typical. He isn't following what you suggested at all."

"Why do you think that is?" Dumbledore asked her.

"Who knows...Imperious Curse."

He didn't say anything. Could he really be thinking she was right about that? It was a scary thought... Voldemort taking control of someone who had the highest office in the magical world.

"Percy Weasley is the Defense Against the Dark Arts teacher."

"WHAT!"

"It's starting Helen. Your time is coming ever so quickly. Are you ready for it?"

"Alby...you're scaring me. What time? Am I ready for what?"

"For your past...present...and future to meet as one."

"Alby..."

"Helen...what do you think is your job in everything."

"To find the amulet...to find Eumaria's heir and show them where the amulet is...obviously only show them since the heir is the only one who can touch it."

"And how will you find this heir...the Sacred Keeper."

"They have a mark...Alby! Is it Harry? Is Harry the-"

"Harry's scar was from Voldemort, not birth."

"Oh yeah..."

Helen slumped over in her chair. How was she supposed to find anything when she could barely find a day to herself and if she were to look wouldn't it be at one of her houses...the winter home in Carna, Summer home in Florida, or the main house in Salem, M.A.?

"Stay optimistic." he instructed, breaking her thoughts. "Please try, Helen. Harry needs you to stay strong and to keep *him* together. He has Ron and Hermione but you're the only one he can identify with on a certain level. "

"I'll try."

"I know you will. Thank you."

Helen's eyes grew wide.

"You sound as if you're going away or something, Alby."

"I told you. Your time is drawing near. As that time approaches...you will have to find strength within. Just...please...no Salucidi attacks. Carry chocolate around everywhere and the potion vials from St. Mungo's."

"I will but you aren't going right?"

Dumbledore stepped from behind his desk and put a hand at on the top of her head.

"I'll be there even if you don't think I am."

Helen didn't like his answer at all. Dumbledore knew something and wasn't sharing. She could see it in his eyes.

"Alby..."

The doors blew open. Fudge and four wizards Helen couldn't recognize stormed in with their wands pointing at Dumbledore.

"What the-" Helen screamed.

Fudge turned to her with bloodshot eyes.

"Go to your dorm!" Fudge snarled in a very very terrifying voice.

"Hell no!" Helen yelled defiantly. "What crap are you trying to pull?"

"OUT!" he screamed, looking like he was going to throw her through the window.

"Helen..." Dumbledore started.

Helen stared into Dumbledore's eyes and read what he wanted her to know. He wanted her to go. Her time had come. She slowly backed into the wall and fumbled for the door knob. She walked backward out the door before one of the wizards slammed it closed. After a few seconds she heard banging and then a thump. She opened the door and saw all of wizards on the floor unconscious but Dumbledore was nowhere.

"Go." someone whispered.

Helen slammed the door and ran as fast as her feet could carry her until she collapsed on the floor, trying to breath and calm her nerves.

Draco POV

Draco was walking past the entrance hall when he saw Helen looking distraught. Hmm. Would he torment her? Tease and poke fun at her? Just leave her be? Or would he do what he'd been having the inclination to do lately...be her knight in shining armor or however the freaked up muggles called it.

He walked over to her and hesitated before helping her on her feet. She brushed the hair out of her face and looked up at him with bewilderment and gratefulness. It was something Draco had never seen. Usually her eyes were full of cockiness or dislike when her gaze fell on him.

"It's a good to know you don't kick people when they're down." she whispered, still ready with a quick statement as always. What she said wasn't exactly true though. He should be making her miserable and instead he wasn't. Hurting people when weakened lost it's fun...that must be it.

"WHAT THE-" said a voice that belonged to Ron.

Draco looked at Ron, Hermione, and Harry and then back at Helen before realizing that when he'd helped her up he'd never let go and they were so close it looked like they were hugging. He let go of Helen like she was undiluted bubotuber pus.

"WHAT WAS THAT, MALFOY?" Harry boomed.

"Oh that's right...Potty has a soft spot for Helen." he leered.

Helen sighed. It looked like a war was about to start and now was not the time. She had to tell them what she knew.

"You guys...something awful happened. Let's go to Gryffindor Common Room."

"DRACO BETTER EXPLAIN BEFORE WE GO ANYW-"

"Harry! Ron! Trust me! The worst thing happened!" she screamed, grabbing them by the arm and steering them towards the Common room without a second glance at Draco.

"Well that's a nice way to thank somebody..." He thought moodily.

Chapter 15: Warped

Helen rubbed her sore limbs on the way down to the Great Hall for breakfast. She'd slept on the wrong side of the bed and was aching. What made it a bad day...Dumbledore was no longer at Hogwarts. He was the main reason she felt safe and now her security blanket was gone. Even worse...who would the new headmaster be? Worse times two...there was a 99% chance Neil would come back. Worse times ten...what was up with the whole Draco deal?

"Damn it! What else has gone wrong?" Helen asked as she sat down and pulled the Daily Prophet out of Hermione's hand. The headline itself caused Helen to freeze.

Hogwarts Headmaster, Percy Weasley

After the previous Headmaster, Albus Dumbledore, fled the castle last night for some mysterious reason, the Ministry decided that it was time for their High Inquisitor to have a higher duty.

"We were thinking about getting rid of the High Inquisitor position but the Minister decided to keep as extra precaution." says new Headmaster Percy, "My Inquisitorial duties were completed after the third week of school. I am thrilled that the minister found me qualified and 'the best wizard for the job'."

Not everyone agrees with Mr. Weasley on that one.

"No one has run Hogwarts better than Albus Dumbledore!" said Professor Marchbanks who was booted out of her Defense Against the Dark Arts Position for Percy.

"How could she be booted out if she was only a substitute? Geeze." Helen said, ripping up the newspaper and vanishing it, rather than burning it as she'd like to. She looked up the staff table and saw Percy sitting there looking smug.

"Wish I could rip the smile right off his face!"

"Settle down." Hermione warned. "No getting upset. Drink a vial right now!"

"I don't need it now!" Helen shouted. Hermione grabbed one from Helen's robes and thrust it in her hands.

"You do!"

Helen drank it unhappily and then got up from their table.

"But you didn't even eat anything!" Ron exclaimed.

"Not hungry." Helen informed. "See you in class."

For three weeks there was no word on where Dumbledore was, nor had there been any reports. Helen strangely felt calm. It was probably a good thing she didn't hear anything from him because it meant that he didn't need any help or he wasn't in danger. But something happened that cheered Helen up a lot.

"Helen...can we talk?" Bianca asked. Helen had been sitting with her feet in lake. Her prediction about a heat wave had proven true seeing as the water was surprisingly warm (even for May)

"How's Dumbledore?" Bianca asked.

"Are you asking because the Slytherins want the 411? You told them he's my guardian I expect."

"No!" Bianca yelled. "I promised you I'd never tell no matter how mad I'd ever be at you and I kept my promise. I wasn't asking for the Slytherins either. I'm asking because of your health. I heard you were in Mungo's during Christmas."

"Well I'm fine."

"Helen, I'm sorry. I shouldn't have let a guy come between us."

"You're right. You shouldn't have...especially a very much taken guy."

Bianca stared at her feet.

"But...I was at fault too. I should have tried to make amends the first day. Instead I kept a grudge and I'm sorry." Helen concluded.

"You didn't do anything wrong."

"I did. You forgive me?"

Bianca smiled.

"That's what friends are for."

Helen grinned. She'd gotten Kevin and Bianca back.

"But you do know I'm going back to Salem." Bianca said.

"What!"

Helen was taken back. She hadn't expected that.

"After this year ends. You are coming back too aren't you?"

"I...I don't know. Depends if I'm needed or not."

"Needed?"

"Nevermind. I don't know. I hadn't even thought about it."

"Well...when the time comes I'll beg you then okay?"

"Okay."

"Oh and uh....good luck in Quidditch tomorrow."

"Thanks."

So there she had it. She'd made up with Kevin and Bianca but both of them would be leaving by the end of the year. Soon she'd have to choose again between Hogwarts and Salem, but for now she had to worry about not "accidentally" knocking Cho off her broom. Just because she'd said she didn't mind Kevin and Cho as a couple...that didn't mean she had to like the girl any better.

Chapter 16: Meet Your Maker

It was the final Quidditch Match of the year and the decider of which house won the Quidditch Cup. Fifteen minutes in and Gryffindor was a hundred points up, since Ravenclaw's chasers were slow and inexperienced, however their beaters were relentless and brutal. Ginny, Katie, and Helen wouldn't have been quite so banged up if Kevin had been playing at his best but they figured Cho had distracted him.

"Kevin! Get a grip!" Ginny shouted as she flew past him and scored another ten points for Gryffindor before getting beamed to the chest with a nasty bludger that sent her off her broom, past Helen's grip, and into the grass below.

"Time!" Katie shouted as she and the rest of the Gryffindors touched back down to the ground.

Ginny was as okay as she possibly could be considering that she just fell from fifty feet in the air. She could stand but as rules of Quidditch goes...once a player's feet touch the ground they are disqualified from the game except if the time out was called and Ginny fell before the time out.

"Take them out!" Ginny was screaming at Kevin. "Stop being such a git!"

Kevin was in pretty bad shape. Katie wasn't yelling at him but she looked sad.

"C'mon you guys. Let's get back in the air." She mumbled.

In ten more minutes the score was 160 to 20 with Gryffindor's lead and Katie had possession of the Quaffle. If they made this shot it wouldn't matter if Ravenclaw got the snitch because Gryffindor would still have more points.

**"RAVENCLAW AND GRYFFINDOR SEEKERS SPOT THE SNITCH!
CHANG IN THE LEAD!"** Bianca commented.

Katie was a few yards from the score box but a bludger went past her at a speeding rate and in dodging it she dropped the Quaffle but Helen caught it. Helen flew as fast as she could possibly go. The Keeper wasn't watching. She threw the Quaffle and it sailed through the air. The Keeper turned his head...he flew on his broom...his hand outstretched...and batted it away. Harry would have to catch the snitch to win then.

**"QUAFFLE BLOCKED BUT SEEKERS NECK AND NECK...OoO CHANG
KICKS POTTER! POTTER BUDGES UP BUT LOOKS LIKE NO HOPE FOR
GRYFFINDOR."**

"Use the bludger!!!" Helen screamed at Kevin. "Knock Cho off!"

Kevin just stood frozen. The bludger was coming his way.

"DO IT FOR GRYFFINDOR KEVIN!" Helen screamed.

Kevin swung the bat...the bludger zoomed through the air...and knocked Harry on the lower back.

**"BLUDGER KNOCKS POTTER FORWARD! HE CATCHES THE SNITCH.
GRYFFINDOR WINS 210 to 20!!! MY BEST FRIEND'S TEAM WON!"** Bianca shouted.

Helen gave her the thumbs up before jumping off her broom and running at her teammates. They'd won! They'd won!

"Omg Harry good job!" Helen screamed hugging him and kissing him on the cheek. In fact she was kissing all the guys...Harry, Ron, Kevin...("You dork! You hit Harry but that was the best mistake!") Neville...Draco...

"We won!" Helen screamed happily and kissed somebody on what she aimed as the cheek but they turned their head and her lips brushed against someone else's. Helen jumped backwards and looked to see that it was...

"Draco!" Helen screeched consternated. "Woah! Omg...I...umm...holy crap!"

She could feel her face get redder. Of all people...MALFOY for that to happen with!

She was completely freaking out now but Draco just seemed totally amused.

"Sorry!" she blurted before running as far away from him as possible.

"Party in Gryffindor Common Room!!!" Ginny shouted with her arm around Dean.

Everyone started running back inside to get the party started!

Helen was in bed. The Gryffindors partied until Professor McGonagall told them they had to go to bed and Helen was glad because she'd had too many butterbeers and mad muggles and was feeling weird already. (One reason she drank so much was because of that...accidental lip peck with Draco.)

Yes...sleep was coming easily for her, and dreaming was on its way...

* * *THE DREAM* *

Princess Eumaria was taking her bath while servants came in and out pouring sweet smelling oils into the water and offering heaps of fabulous foods.

"Where is he?" she thought. Then she saw him...his dark and light hair and deep purple eyes.

"Rima." she told her servants. They bowed and left quickly.

"Nae saian luum`e" he said in his deep voice.

"Uma, (Yes) Samusotepso. It has been too long. Why do you keep me waiting?"

"Much apologies your majesty. What kept me was finding a suitable gift for you."

Eumaria smiled. She was very pleased. He lifted a beautiful necklace in front of her and bent by the water's edge to secure the necklace around her neck.

"Ta curucuar (It's beautiful)"

"Lle naa curucuar (You are beautiful). This amulet will allow you to walk among the dead beyond the widow's veil."

"Truly?"

"Yes. No one may touch it but a belegohtar (Sacred Keeper). You are a belegohtar."

"Why do this for me?"

"Amin mela lle (I love you)"

He leaned close.....

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The Princess was furious. Samusotepso betrayed her! He stole her jewels. She turned to her right and caught a spear that was aimed at her and threw it out of his hands.

"Lle maa quel (You look good)"

"Amin feuya ten' lle. (You disgust me)" she spat. "Thief"

"Tanya awra (That hurt)" he said sarcastically.

"Give me my jewels!"

"No."

Simultaneously they grabbed the daggers that were mounted on the walls and started attacking each other with it. He lunged for her head and she ducked and went for his stomach which he blocked with his other hand. Then he went for her shoulder and she moved to the left. He went for her other side and she moved to the right and slashed his arm, leaving blood on one of her daggers.

"Lle naa ohtar. (You are a warrior)"

"As are you."

He went for her neck then her thigh and she blocked everything but barely. He was very fast but she was agile. As they fought Eumaria was backed closer and closer to the wall. She looked out of the corner of her eye and Samusotepso used that time to knock one dagger out of her hand. She ran at the wall, jumped in the air and kicked off from it, doing a flip over Samusotepso's head, and landed behind him, giving a quick slash before calling.

"Mejia!"

Her guards stormed in the room and captured Samusotepso quickly.

"My death is only the beginning." he screamed as she watched him being taken from the room. Her heart was hardened. Anyone who betrayed her deserved to die...no matter what history they might have had.

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Eumaria was sad. Her people were dying because of Samusotepso's curse. She must retrieve the cure and her jewels from beyond the veil. She stepped through it.

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Nefira and Elni knelt by the Widow's Veil. It was the day after Princess Eumaria fell...with the necklace/amulet left behind. Nefira didn't dare touch it. She did not have the Sacred Mark and therefore would be killed too.

"What shall you do with it?" Elni asked.

"That is no matter to you!" she yelled.

"You should be thankful you have my father's blood. If you were full Eriam like your mother and couldn't wear the bracelet you'd be dead by now!"

"Well I still have Tepso!" she screamed. "And it is because of YOUR father that Tepso exists in the first place! Now get out!"

Elni laughed and left the room. As soon as he did Nefira took a cup and scooped the amulet into it. If she had the power she would go herself and rescue her mother but the amulet was useless unless the Sacred Keeper put the amulet around the person's neck themselves and clasped it shut and also...if a Sacred Keeper was killed...the amulet would no longer work until the next Sacred Keeper was born.

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Helen was in Legillimency. She stared in Harry's dazzling green eyes and suddenly saw Sirius hit with a spell and falling through a curtain...no...it wasn't a curtain. It was a black veil.

* * * * *End Dream*

Helen woke with a start. Holy! She got dressed quickly and ran as fast as she could towards Dumbledore's office.

"Hey! How'd you get in there?" Percy asked as he started walking quickly down the corridor. "That office was sealed!"

"Pepper Imps." Helen said quickly as she ran in and the entryway sealed it self behind her and right in Percy's face. Helen opened Dumbledore's office door and ran behind the desk to the cabinet. No...Dumbledore's normal pensieve was there...her grandmother's pensieve...the cup Nefira had...where was it? Helen looked back on the desk and found it. She picked it up and wondered how she could pull the amulet out without actually going through the pensieve when that question was solved for her. A strange yellow glow emitted from around it and the amulet floated in the air for a few seconds before falling on the desk. Helen put down the pensieve and touched the

amulet. She cringed and waiting to get sucked up or to die but nothing happened. Her hunch had been correct.

She was the Sacred Keeper. She'd known it the second she saw Eumaria again. (The first time was in the Cryptic Case she'd looked through at Hogsmeade with Harry, though she had forgotten about it.)

It all was making sense. Eumaria had a triangular shaped scar on her neck but her daughter Nefiri didn't. Her grandmother had the scar but her mother didn't and lastly...Helen had the scar. That's what Dumbledore had tried to hint to her. That's why Dumbledore showed her all those visions in the pensieve earlier in the year instead of just telling her.

Helen picked up the amulet and secured it around her neck. So the Death Eaters knew where the Widow's Veil was and wanted to use the amulet to bring dark wizards back to the world...so what did Harry have to do with it? She'd already figured it out. Sirius, Harry's godfather, had fallen through the Widow's Veil. She had to talk to Harry about this.

In a few minutes Helen was in the boy's dorm and shaking Harry awake.

"Harry! Wake up!" she whispered.

"Hermione..."

"No it's Helen. C'mon get up! It's about Sirius."

Helen had said the magic words. Harry sat up so quickly that his head collided with hers and they both yelped and fell back.

"Geeze, Harry!" she shouted "Get up."

Harry lifted the covers off him and got up. Helen had an odd smile on her face. Almost naughty look.

"I'll meet you in the common room." she said. "Right now you're dressed for Hermione."

She grinned evil-like and left. Harry looked down and almost yelled out loud. He'd only been wearing boxers (because the heat wave remember.... can't exactly wear warm pajamas.).

"Hey!" he said in realization. She'd said he was dressed for Hermione! He grabbed some clothes and put them on quickly to find out about Sirius *and* what she meant about the Hermione thing.

Could Sirius be alive? He didn't dare hope.

Helen had told Harry absolutely everything she knew. By the time she was finished he had a stunned look.

"So you were kidnapped because they wanted the amulet."

"Yeah."

"So what's your job now?"

"Alby said Sacred Keepers protect certain Sacred objects. I'm guessing I just have to make sure they don't get their hands on it."

"Helen...can I borrow it?"

"Why...bring Sirius back?"

"Yes."

"Harry you can't! Only the person who *wears* it can come back. How could the both of you wear it?"

"Then throw it in there and let Sirius find it."

"What good would that do? Sirius wouldn't know what it was and besides that...the Sacred Keeper would have to put it around his neck. I don't think Eumaria would be nice enough to do that. She herself would probably come back."

Harry frowned in concentration.

"Then at least let me talk to him."

"Harry..." she said. "Give up on-"

Helen stopped. There was yelling. There was screaming. Helen and Harry looked at each other, grabbed their wands and ran out of the common room.

Harry and Helen were racing down the corridor when Harry stopped.

"Wha-"

Harry covered Helen's mouth in time to hear Professor McGonagall's angry voice. They peered around the corner and saw eight wizards shooting spells at the Professor. Before Helen knew it, Harry was out from around the corner and had his wand out when Helen pulled him back.

"We've got to h-"

This time Helen put her hand over Harry's mouth and pointed for him to look. First he heard that the yelling stopped and only one voice was heard. Draco's.

"Father what are-"

"Draco, go to your room!"

"But father!"

"DRACO!"

"No wait." said a woman, (Bellatrix) Harry balled his hands into fists and jumped up but Helen pushed him back down.

"Draco can find Cliff for us."

Helen froze. Draco was in on the whole thing?

"Cliff? You mean Helen Cliff? Why?"

Good. Draco didn't know anything about her or that his father's band murdered her family.

"Don't ask questions! Just bring her to us!"

"Wait a second...the Cliff's were supposed to be dead except Helen. You killed her parents didn't you?"

"No. The American lot did. Draco, what is wrong with you! Stop asking questions and GO GET HER!"

"Draco's just curious, Lucius. He'll need to know things if he's to be a Death Eater too someday." Bellatrix said in a voice that was meant to sound wise.

"She'll be in the Gryffindor Common Room now."

"Then just get out of out way!" Lucius yelled, irked.

Draco turned and walked away.

"Get the Dementors." Bellatrix said, her cold voice returned. "The old bat's getting a Death Kiss."

Helen felt a wave of cold wash over her. The dementors were in the castle. She turned to Harry who was already out from behind the corner and shouting "*Expecto Patronum*" and Harry's stag shooed away the Dementors while Helen yelled "*Accio wand*" and gave McGonagall her wand back. Helen turned around and saw that the eight wizards had circled her. She screamed and tossed Harry his wand while McGonagall shouted spells at the wizards but as Helen tried to get away Bellatrix grabbed her. Helen punched her as hard as she could in the eye and elbowed her in the stomach. Helen ran but Bellatrix used a trip jinx and then threw an odd looking gold card on top of her and then Helen felt an odd tugging at her navel.

Her eyes got big and she tried to throw the card off but it was too late. The portkey activated.

Harry stared. They got Helen. They got Helen!

"Professor McGonagall! You are FIRED!" Percy screamed.

She looked outraged.

"YOU LET THEM TAKE A STUDENT! WHAT IS THE MINISTER GOING TO SAY? MY CAREER IS TRASHED THANKS TO YOU! GET OUT OF THIS CASTLE NOW! NOW I SAY! NOW!"

"She tried to save Helen!" Harry yelled.

"DETENTION, POTTER! YOU'RE OUT OF BED!"

"It's the morning, Percy! Students are allowed out of bed in the morning!"

"DETENTION FOR YOUR CHEEK!"

Percy turned on his heel and stomped off muttering that he'd have to inform the minister. Harry turned to McGonagall who was heading out the double doors.

"I'm coming with you!" Harry said running after her but she stopped him.

"You're staying at Hogwarts. Let the Order deal with this. What I need you to do is inform Snape as well."

"Professor! I know where they're taking her! They're going to the Ministry! They'll take her to that veil Sirius died though."

Professor McGonagall's face went white.

"I must try finding Dumbledore. You go tell Snape. Then go to bed...eat breakfast...and wait for us to keep you informed alright?"

"But-"

"Potter! You will be expelled! Stay here or-"

Harry turned away from her. When she used that voice he knew there was no arguing. He'd go find Snape but then he'd go to the forest get thestrals and fly to the ministry by himself. He couldn't risk anyone getting hurt because they wanted to go with him like what happened the previous year.

"Potter." called a voice.

"Malfoy." Harry said coldly. "Back off. Haven't you caused enough trouble as it is! You and your whole stinking family!"

"Aren't you going to go find her?"

"I've got orders not to so clear off!"

"You're actually listening to McGonagall? I guess you don't care about Helen like I thought."

"CLEAR OFF!"

"Go find her Potter." Draco said, turning around. "Before they decide to get rid of her."

"They can't kill her. They need something."

"Torture long enough will make anyone speak."

Harry frowned. That was true, but wasn't this something Voldemort would do to Harry there? Would he actually do the same thing twice?

"If you're so concerned why don't *you* go save her?"

"Because, Potter, I don't think it's worth getting disowned or killed over someone who hates my guts and doesn't even give a dungbomb about me."

"You must be really thick, Malfoy. Do you think she'll still hate you if you save her life? Forget it. I'm wasting my time talking with you."

Harry knocked on Snape's office door and went in.

Harry was sitting in the common room frowning. Hermione and Ron had found him and had forced him to tell them about the Helen predicament. Hermione was insisting that they sit tight and wait for McGonagall to keep them informed. Ron didn't give him an opinion at all.

"What's going on?" Kevin asked cheerfully as he entered the common room.
"Where is everyone? Woah look at the time! I missed breakfast!"

"Kev...sit down." Hermione said with such a disconcerting look on her face that Kevin dropped into the couch.

"Where's Helen?" he asked looking around. The three of them looked back and forth at one another.

"Where's Helen!" Kevin shouted, jumping up. "Is she in the hospital again?"

"No."

"Then WHERE is SHE?"

"They've kidnapped her."

Kevin fell back into his chair and put his face in his hands.

"We know where she is."

Kevin looked up so fast he seemed to get a crick in his neck and rubbed it.

"Ouch...where? Is the Ministry going to go find her? Is Dumbledore back?"

"No and No."

"Wait!" Hermione shouted. "Helen can't be in the Department of Mysteries! The Ministry officials would be there! They'd have Unspeakables in there! They'd probably bring her only at night!"

"So...holy tumtigger!" Ron yelled. Look at the Daily Prophet!

Another Ministry Break-In

The ministry of magic has been broken into and an ancient object that is crucial to the ministry's Department of Mysteries has been stolen. The ministry didn't have a comment for us and wouldn't even say what the thieves took but you can bet the Daily Prophet will try to find an answer. This story will be continued in the next issue.

"So they stole the veil. Great." Hermione rolled her eyes. "Just great."

"Now where do you think she is?" Kevin shouted angrily. "England blows! I'm sorry but you-know-who is the reason Helen could never live a normal life. They ruined her! I am so sick of this country!"

"Blame Voldemort not the UK." Hermione muttered. "England is the motherland of Magic."

"Hmph. That's what you say."

"What are we going to do?" Ron asked, looking at Harry.

Harry could only think of one person who might have overhead something. Someone who might possibly have information. All they'd need to do is force it out of him.

"We find Malfoy."

They stared at him in surprise.

"Here's the plan..."

Helen fell with a thump on a cold and damp dungeon floor. As soon as she landed she got to her feet and tried to run but the evil eight apparated and magically tied her to a chair. She tried to free herself but unlike muggle ropes...there was no possible way to escape.

"Well, well, well...Helen...surely that cannot be your first name. Isn't it Helia-sutamen Bastet Isis?"

"Cliff. Helia-su-tamen Bastet Cliff."

"No, hun. Cliff was your idiot father's name." said the tall wizard behind in a hood. "Isis is the name of your ancestors. So do you have my amulet?"

"**Y**our amulet? No I do not have **your** amulet." she said indignantly.

"Is that so?"

The wizard whipped out his wand and tore Helen's robes a little too low down her neckline, revealing the chain that the amulet was attached to.

"**M**y amulet." said the wizard.

"No. It is mine." said a cold voice that made Helen cringe. She felt sick to her stomach. Very sick as a thin wizard stepped from the shadows. Helen screamed bloody murder at the sight of his red snake eyes and lurid bloodless complexion. His body was thin in a grotesque way and his voice was like fingernails on a chalkboard with the sound of all the scary movie monsters combined.

"Voldemort." Helen whispered weakly.

"*Lord* Voldemort to you." he replied. He bent over her so that they were level before slamming her head to the right and examining the left side of her neck.

"Ah, the Sacred Mark." he said trailing an icy finger down until it reached her mark. The moment he touched it he was thrown backward into his followers, knocking them over. Helen couldn't help but laugh.

"*Crucio*"

Helen was screaming instead. Her whole body was on fire and ripping apart.

"Enough." Voldemort shouted at the tall hooded wizard. The pain stopped but now Helen's fear increased. She didn't want to feel that pain ever again.

"You see that veil." said Voldemort.

"Yes."

"I know that you know that I need the amulet. If you want to stay alive then give it to me now."

"Kill me. If you do then the amulet will no longer work."

"So you've been talking with Dumbledore, have you?"

"Big deal."

"Fine...I may not kill you but that doesn't mean I can't find other ways to persuade you to change your mind. Neil."

The wizard in the hood finally lifted it off his head and Helen wished he didn't. One person could have made her situation worse and Neil was that person. He looked the same as he did so many years ago except older, taller, and had darker violet eyes.

"You remember me, don't you Helen?"

She felt her face redden with pure hatred.

"Give us the amulet. You don't want to end up the same as your parents, do you?"

"How could you! After my parents took you in...treated you like a son! You didn't deserve it you selfish son of a-"

"Now, now. You wouldn't want anymore of those Salucidi attacks now would you?"

"Eat me."

"Maybe some other time. Right now we're giving you one more chance! Give us the amulet!"

"Amin dolotha lle (I hate you)" Helen spat....literally.

"Amin sinta (I know). Ta naa si (That is a no.) to my question then."

"You'll never get your filthy hands on it...descendent of Elni!"

Neil laughed.

"How did you figure it out?"

"Your eyes, you freak."

Neil turned to Voldemort.

"Master...what do you want your loyal servant to do?"

"Master? You loyal?" Helen laughed bravely. "You haven't been loyal to anyone in your whole damn life. It wouldn't surprise me if you killed your own parents!"

"Actually he did." Voldemort said, enjoying the look on Helen's face. "I don't care what you do to her as long as she's still able to give me the amulet." he instructed before walking out and shutting the door behind him but not before calling out to Neil. "Have fun."

Kevin spotted Draco sitting in the library and he walked over to him.

"Yo, Malfoy."

"Relle. What a surprise. Let me guess...you're here for Helen."

"Huh?"

"Don't play dumb. You're good enough without pretending. Haven't you noticed Helen's gone?"

"Hermione said she was sleeping in."

"Granger lied."

"Uh huh...like I believe you." Kevin said popping a blue square in his mouth.

"What're those?"

"New Honeyduke's candy. Way cold. You wouldn't want any."

"Pass them over."

This was exactly what Kevin wanted. He tossed Draco one and leaned back on his chair casually.

"Suit yourself. It's your funeral."

Draco ate the candy and then looked up alarmed as Harry, Hermione, and Ron jumped up from behind the book shelves and sat at their table.

"What did you give me?" Draco yelled.

"A little truth square." Harry said calmly. Draco's eyes grew wide. "It's not strong of course...but it's good enough to find out really embarrassing secrets we could frame you with if you don't give us information on Helen that we need."

"Don't threaten me, Potter!"

"Threaten you I will!" Harry shouted. "You just stood there and let them take Helen!"

"I had no choice!" Draco yelled. "What good what it do, going against my father and You-know-who? They'd hurt or kill me!"

"Then they aren't worth hanging around with! You can't please them all the time! One wrong move and you're done!" Hermione shouted.

"Bug off mudblood!"

Harry grabbed Draco by the collar but Ron pulled him away.

"What do you think about Pansy?" Kevin asked. He knew Draco would have to answer because Draco had eaten Fred and George's Love Truth Squares that Helen had in her dorm.

"She's pretty but annoying in an obsessed way. The only reason I went to the Yule Ball with her in fourth year was because Father's been trying to set us up for the longest time. It's not Pansy that I am attracted to." Draco blurted. As soon as he realized what he said he growled and tried to get up but they had already conjured up ropes that tied him to the chair and took away his wand.

"Where's Helen?"

"How should I know?"

"Hey Harry...can you think up anymore questions to ask him?"

"I said I don't know!!!"

"Name every girl you ever fantasized about."

"Pansy. Granger. Helen. Delacour. Patil and Patil. That witch that came by this summer... Weasley-"

"WOAH! Which Weasley!"

"Ginny you idiot!" Draco yelled angrily. "STOP RIGHT NOW!"

"YOU PERVERT!" Ron yelled almost choking Draco. Only when Draco started screaming did Kevin, Harry, and Hermione pulled Ron away.

"They might be at Nott's house."

"What?"

"I said-"

"We know what you said! Where's Nott's house?"

"The Basilisk's Den."

"Wtf."

"The Basilisk's Den! It's near my house." Draco replied bitterly.

"And where the hell is your house?"

"Forget the question. Malfoy's going to take us there." Harry said.

"And why would I do that?"

"Malfoy...who do you fancy?"

"Helen." Draco looked appalled with himself...probably for the first time in his life. "DAMN IT! I'M GOING TO KILL YOU POTTER!"

"Keep thinking that." Harry laughed. "Let's go."

"Harry....I don't think that's such a good idea." Hermione whispered. "It's what Voldemort expects."

"He's not going to try the same trick twice."

"Maybe not but you being there could be an added bonus!"

"Hermione! My scar has been hurting for the past hour! Helen is *not* cooperating and Voldemort doesn't like it one bit! We know for sure this time that they have her! Now Malfoy how long is it going to take us to get to Nott's house?"

"I'm not going with you!" Draco yelled. "So buzz off!"

"Fine! How long will it take?"

"By broom...Six hours. Unless you have a magic carpet...you're in trouble."

"Get out of here, Malfoy."

Draco shrugged nonchalantly and left the library.

"Harry we should just inform McGonagall and Snape about what we know."

"Fine, Hermione go get Snape. Ron, Kevin, and I will wait for you by the forest with the thestrals."

"Harry..."

"We'll wait! We'll wait! Go tell Snape!"

"Fine." Hermione said, and as soon as she left Harry jumped up.

"You're not going to just wait are you?" Kevin asked.

"No way."

Chapter 17: un-CHO-sen

Harry lowered his hand from his head. He could feel that Voldemort was surprised that things weren't going his way but he was being patient for some reason. Voldemort thought he'd eventually get what he wanted.

"Where are the thestrals?" Kevin asked.

Harry frowned. He'd completely forgotten that the only reason they got the thestrals last time was because he and Hermione had been drenched in Grawp's blood.

"We need blood." Harry told them.

"We can kill Malfoy." Ron suggested.

"Blood replenishing potion!" Kevin shouted. Harry and Ron looked at him to explain.

"I want to be a healer so in the rare spare moments I've had I've been trying to make a blood-replenishing potion."

"My dad had to have that last year."

"Where is it?" Harry asked, getting hopeful.

"I have some in my dorm."

"Hurry and go get it."

Kevin set off back toward the castle.

Kevin POV

Helen...Helen was taken again! Was she going to be able to take what was happening? Would she have another Salucidi incident? God, he hoped not. If those punks hurt her...no. He couldn't think of that right now. He had to focus on saving Helen.

*A/n: Darvit! I'm in a tumtigger. Right now I have this notion in my head right about now that could be seriously sad and I mean SAD! I don't think I could bring myself to do it. Helen would...oh man. Helen would FLIP. I don't think even she could handle it. No way. The poor girl's gone though enough. I won't be as cruel as to make Kevin die tragically to save her. Whoops! I said it! Hmm. Will I?

You mark my words though...by the end of this story...someone's life is about to get trashed. Sorry.

Kevin was running back out of his dorm with a huge cauldron of blood. All he had had to do was something very risky...slit his arm and drink so much of the potion that

tons of blood poured out of his arm. After all...blood replenishing meant more blood...it didn't *make* blood itself, but Kevin was willing to do it to save Helen.

*A/n: No actually I change my mind. I think I'll make it so that everyone is safe. Nah! Too boring!

"WATCH OUT!" Kevin hollered but it was too late. Draco smashed into Kevin and the entire cauldron full was spilled on him from head to foot.

"WTF!" Draco swore. "Damn it man!"

*A/n: Sorry bout the language but they do it in the books and under these circumstances...they're bound to be using all this "French".

"Great!" Hermione shouted. "Now he'll have to come with us."

Before Draco could react, Hermione and Kevin grabbed him from under his arms and dragged him onto the grounds, towards the forest.

"What happened?" Harry yelled. "What-"

"Forget it." Kevin mumbled. "I see the thestrals."

"That was quick." Ron mumbled. "Boy, Malfoy you reek."

"Shut it." Draco barked.

"Kevin!" said a panicky voice.

"Geeze! Why does this always have to happen every freaking year!" Harry shouted. "Why does everyone always come along on a rescue mission!"

Kevin froze. What was Cho doing there?

"Kevin don't you dare go!" Cho cried. "Don't you dare go after Helen! She isn't worth it!"

"Cho!" Kevin said shocked. "She's my best friend."

"Look what happened to Cedric!" she shouted, sobbing.

"Cho."

"You come down from...whatever...right now! If you don't...w-w-we're over!" Cho stuttered. Kevin looked from Harry's determined face, to Ron's scared one, then his eyes glanced on Blood-drenched Draco, and worried Hermione.

"Then it's over." Kevin said. When it came down to it...he didn't mind at all. It wasn't like he ever really had feelings for her other than fondness. He was in love with Helen as weird as it sounded. Yes, he'd wasted a year and he would be kicking

himself for it later...but it was about time he ended his relationship with Cho. He figured by the look on her face it was the first time a guy rejected *her* instead of vice-versa. He waved goodbye as his thestral rose into the air and followed Harry, Ron, Draco, and Hermione's.

Chapter 18: Unleash the Dragon

Draco POV

Draco didn't know how to feel. He was covered in blood...he was being licked and riding something that was invisible...and he was helping his enemies save a girl that hated his guts at the risk of being disowned or disemboweled or dismembered...or just plain dead. None of those sounded appealing. He'd have to think up some excuse to save his bum from his father and still make him look like a hero in Helen's eyes, though it looked like Harry and Kevin were going about it better than he was. Draco still had to play the double agent which sucked big time!

It seemed like an eternity before they spotted the Nott household...they weren't quite near enough yet but for some reason the thestrals were landing. Good: in his opinion because this whole experience scared him so bad he was surprised he hadn't wet himself but bad: because it would take another fifteen minutes to get to house and it had probably been hours and hours and hours and hours.

"Pot-head! Are these beasts trained to do this?" Draco yelled.

"There's a dead animal down there." Hermione explained. "Hey Harry are you okay?"

Draco saw Harry with his head bent down on the invisible something...like he was in pain. After a few seconds and right before the thestrals touched down he raised his head, panting.

"Voldemort's really angry. He-Ahhhhh." Harry screamed, falling off his thestral and crouching in pain. Hermione and Ron rushed over to him and tried to help him up.

"We have to hurry!" Harry started running, on shaky feet. "They won't kill her but she's getting close to Salucidi."

Helen had been lying on the floor, involuntarily wallowing in her own pool of blood. She'd been there for what seemed like seven hours. The first ten minutes were pretty bearable. A few slaps here and there. Nothing big. After about an hour it went to punches and kicks. Then getting the hems of her robes lit on fire (feet and legs included) but Lucius told him just to result to the Cruciatus Curse (which felt like her whole body was being lit instead). Then after about an hour it changed to Ancient past punishment. Neil's preference was using the same dagger that Eumaria had slashed Samusotepso with on her. Luckily she'd only sustained cuts across her cheek, right side of her neck (that one was shallow), her robes being torn though (thank goodness she had clothes underneath) and a lovely engravement of an amulet that Neil carved

into her arm. After she was untied (they knew she was too weak to even try to get up) they spent the last two hours breaking her wrist (the same one she sprained in Quidditch) and a few ribs. Voldemort came in to see how things were going. He and a few others thought it would be amusing to see how a person could react to five powerful wizards putting the Cruciatus Curse on her at the same time. Yeah...as if it wasn't painful enough with one person.

After five doses of this Helen was more than ready to give up. So many people think that you should die before you give in. You should never surrender. This wasn't a movie. This was real life. Most people would give in after only fifteen minutes but Helen's only reason for putting up with it was the fact that her enduring that pain was saving the magical world. But how long could she hold on? It may be days before anyone found her. No! She couldn't even take one more minute of it let alone a full twenty-four hours. Her body was swollen, broken, burned, dug into, and shaking from the effects of the curses thrown at her. If the pain didn't kill her than Salucidi certainly would. It sure was looking like a bright ray of hope right about then. If she purposely tried to fall under Salucidi then she could die and Voldemort would never get the amulet. Her death could save the magical world...but somehow she didn't feel that this was the way things were supposed to go. There had to be another way. *Any other way.*

"One wave of my wand and I can heal you, Helen." Voldemort spoke. "I sense you are ready to give in. I can see it in your eyes."

"Darn." Helen thought. She was too weak to even try and repel Voldemort from using Legillimency.

"GOD PLEASE! SEND SOMEONE!" Helen screamed. "SAVE ME FROM THIS!"

Voldemort, Neil, and the other wizards just sneered, jeered, leered, mocked, and ridiculed her. But there is a God above and he did hear Helen's prayer.

The dungeon doors opened, letting in Harry, Ron, Hermione, Kevin, and Draco.

"Draco!" Lucius fumed. "What are you doing with them?"

"Look at this blood on me! They forced me to come with them."

Way to save his butt, Helen thought. Real smooth...if they'd believe that Harry and the others were actually capable of that.

"Thestrals are attracted by blood and they cut my arm then those bloody beasts tore at me!"

Yeah...that one was better. Much more plausible.

"So this is the famous Harry Potter." Neil said in his unscrupulous tone. "Say goodbye."

BANG! Dumbledore, Kingsley Shacklebolt, Tonks, Mad-Eye, McGonagall, and Lupin burst in the room. Behind them was Fudge and a few wizards who had attacked Dumbledore. Maybe Dumbledore had somehow gotten Fudge out of Voldemort's mind control. Helen didn't care right about then. They'd found her and that was all she could think about. Spells went flying past in every which way. Hermione, Ron, and Kevin went to help the adults and Harry came to her side.

Harry POV

"Helen." He said with an aching look on his face. He couldn't believe the sight before his eyes. Helen had gotten some serious blows but he marveled at the fact that she looked like...a heroine. Harry reached for her arm and she cringed in pain so he let go.

"Harry...." she whispered, "Let me lean on you."

Harry found this an odd thing to say but he slowly helped her up as gently as he could. She was sitting up, resting against his chest. She struggled to lift her arms up to reach for the clasp on the amulet.

"Don't help me." Helen warned the moment Harry was about to try help. It took close to twelve seconds of fumbling before she could undo the clasp. She turned around and cried out in pain.

"Broken ribs." Harry thought.

Helen placed the amulet around his neck.

"Stop right there." Draco shouted, pointing his wand at Helen. Harry expected her to freeze but instead she just smiled.

"Are you going to jinx me, Draco?"

They spent a minute staring at each other, like it was a contest or something when Helen shut the clasp and pulled herself off him.

"Go Harry!" she yelled, falling flat on her back. "Beyond the veil."

Harry nodded and dodged the spells around him. He reached the veil...and he went through it.

Chapter 19: Isis

Helen was finally starting to feel dizzy and her vision was blurring.

"Helen, c'mon. I'm going to get you out of here." said someone above.

"Draco?" she mumbled.

"It's me." he said. "Damn it! I should have paid more attention to Madam Pomfrey. *Ferula.*"

Helen could feel clumsy bandages being wrapped all over her before consciousness finally left her.

~*~

Butica: Helia.

Helen: Mom? You're back? You all are back?

Butica: No, honey. We can't come back. You know that. But we've been watching you and we are so proud of you.

Helen started to cry.

Helen: Mom I've missed you and dad so much.

Butica: I know sweetie but you've got Dumbledore now. Did you know that it was your grandmother who first gave him the nickname Alby?

Helen: No.

Butica: You've been my brave little girl. My brave Helia. Believe in yourself and your friends and you can get through this...together.

Helen: I'm alone.

Butica: You aren't. You never were and you never will be.

Butica hugged her daughter.

Stanley: Helen.

Helen: Daddy.

Stanley: You've gone through a lot in your years. Your journey is just beginning. But after next year... you will see that things will be better. Much better.

Butica and Stanley now had both arms around her.

Butica: Someday we'll find it.

Helen: The rainbow connection.

Butica: The lovers.

Stanley: The dreamers.

Helen: And me.

~*~

Something was on her and crushing her ribs. Helen opened her eyes and saw pale blonde hair

"Draco."

He sat up quick as a snitch and stared at her in surprise. Helen saw that his eyes were watery and a single tear rolled down his cheek. Draco actually had a soft spot? Woah!

"I thought you were dead." Draco said in a strangled voice.

"I don't look that badly do I?" she tried to joke.

He didn't say anything. He only ran his hands through his hair.

"You had me worried there."

"Really?" Helen asked. "I'd think you'd be happy if a Gryffindor got hurt."

"Gryffindor yes. You...no."

What was this Draco was saying?

"Draco...I don't think you realized what you said."

"I never wanted you hurt."

Huh? This coming from Draco Malfoy? The boy who put the devil out of business?

"You mean to say you consider me a friend?"

"Yes...no! Forget it." Draco said, recovering himself. "I didn't realize what I was saying."

"Okay. Well...OUCH!"

The pain in her body intensified all at once and she fell back unconscious.

Chapter 20: Padfoot

Harry looked at his surroundings. It was dark and dreary where he was standing but the further along he walked, past thousands upon thousands of people, the less dark it became and it started to get brighter and brighter. Then Harry had to stop walking. He'd reached a blindingly bright white door. He shielded his eyes and tried to find a door knob but he couldn't feel it. Then the door swung open and Harry moved back.

Sirius: Harry!

Harry: Sirius!

Harry embraced his godfather.

Sirius: Hey Harry! You'll love it here! C'mon let's go see your mom and dad.

Harry: Sirius! I've come for you! I've come to save you!

Sirius: Huh?

Harry: This amulet I'm wearing let me come back here. You've got to come back with me!

Sirius: Nonsense. C'mon Harry.

Sirius grabbed his arm and pulled him through the door. One step and Harry was thrown out.

Sirius: What's going on?

His godfather tried to pull him through again but Harry kept getting pulled back. Then Sirius looked at Harry with understanding.

Harry: What is it?

Sirius: Your necklace thingy...it's kept you alive.

Harry: So?

Sirius: Harry...you shouldn't be here! You're still needed in the magical world!

Harry: But you were all set to have me stay before.

Sirius: I thought you came...rightfully.

Harry: So all I have to do is take off the amulet and I'll get to stay with you and my mum and dad?

Sirius nodded.

Sirius: I guess...when it comes down to it...the choice is yours.

Harry: What do you think I should do?

Sirius: It doesn't matter what I think. But...are you ready to come here and leave all your friends behind? Are you going to let Voldemort live and cover the world in darkness? We will rightfully meet at some point but if you want to do it wrongfully...it is your decision.

Harry didn't know how long he'd stood there thinking...but after deep thought...he turned and walked sorrowfully back. He didn't know that Sirius had followed silently behind him. He didn't realize that when he walked through the veil...the amulet did not come back with him. He did not imagine that Eumaria had taken back her necklace...but it flew through the air and clasped shut...on Sirius's neck.

Chapter 21: Wake me up inside

Main point of my ranting...I am awful! I could have finished this already! I'm ending this story tonight if I can and as quickly as possible so I can focus completely on my sequel...well actually I might start working on another story I never finished....

It had been two days since Helen woke up in the St. Mungo's. From what Harry, Kevin, Ron, and Hermione told her...Voldemort and the Death Eaters escaped. All of them...except Neil who killed himself by jumping through the veil. He did leave her one message which only Dumbledore could repeat back to her. It was. "Amin eleuva lle au'" which means..."I shall see you again."

Helen didn't care. She was too glad just to have been healed. The potions they gave her were almost unbearable. But that was then and thankfully it was over. Right now, Helen was donning her favorite green and yellow muggle shirt and muggle pants, and lying by the lake. She grinned as she saw Harry only a few feet away from her.

"Boo." she yelled.

"Helen!" Harry shouted, jumping slightly. "Wow! You're out of the hospital!"

"Surprise!"

Harry smiled for the first time in a while.

"So how are you?" He asked her.

"Forget me. What's been going on with you?"

"Same old tumtigger."

Helen sighed. She loved how her lingo had been passed on from the American world (Helen herself had gotten it from this really hot Australian/Asian guy named Vo Spader.) and into England.

"Dreading going back to the Dursley's then?"

"Definitely."

"Well look at it this way...next year is our last year...you'll get your own place...go to Auror school with me and Ron...marry Hermione..."

If Harry had been drinking it would have sprayed everywhere.

"WHAT!" He yelled.

"Puh-lease!" Helen laughed. "It's so obvious you've got a thing for her!"

"Oh really?" he blushed.

"See! Maybe you've had too hectic a year to really think about it but it's obvious you've got chemistry between the two of you."

"We're nothing alike though! I mean...yea...I guess I like her but I'm not attracted to her. I just don't see us having a romantic relationship."

"Not if I can help it."

"huh."

"After you've served your time at the Dursley's, I'm inviting everyone to my place."

"In Salem?"

"No."

"Carna?"

"Not that house."

"Florida?"

"You bet! That was my parents' and my own favorite place."

"That would be neat."

"For real! We'd go by the beach...dance...party...I'd introduce you to my Salem friends...It would be great fun before we'd have to worry about N.E.W.T.s!"

*A/n: There was something I wanted to type but I completely forgot! I'm mad too because it was really important to the story! It's 11:00 p.m. by the way.

"Helen."

"Yeah."

"Thanks for letting me talk to Sirius. It really got me to let him go. I could never forget him... I know he's not coming back...but we will reunite." Harry paused. "Luna Lovegood told me that once. Now I understand what she was saying."

"Well...we've got to talk more about this kind of thing in the future." Helen declared.

"Yes." Harry agreed. "I tell Ron and Hermione everything...but there are just some things-"

"You can only talk about with people who've gone through it." Helen finished.

"Right."

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When Harry went back inside Helen was still sitting by the same place. She just had this strange feeling...

She just then noticed that Draco was sitting on the other side of the lake, staring. Helen got up and walked around the bank until she was only a few feet away from him.

"The Wonder Trio got their buddy back I see. Saw you chatting with Pot-head."

Helen wasn't even bothered by his comment. Draco was only evil because his parents were evil. Maybe with the right help he could change his ways...or maybe it was too late for him. She didn't know. Even using Legillimency she could only tell that there was a little part inside Mr. Bad Boy that was yearning to be loved and cared for and appreciated like everyone else. That yearning was very small though. Like a flicker from the light of a candle in the wind. It could easily be blown out.

"Draco...I know you can't be friends with Harry or Ron or Hermione or even Kevin for that matter because of your family. I don't blame you at all for not wanting things to change. But things did change. You tried to save me."

"No I didn't."

"You bandaged my wounds until they could get me to a hospital."

"Would have done it for anyone."

"No you wouldn't. And that's why I thank you."

Recklessly she leaned over him. What was she doing? What was she thinking?

She kissed him softly on the cheek.

She couldn't help it. It was the American thing to do! Okay maybe she should have been jumping up and down in the air, crying hysterically and thanking him a million times and kissing him all over in order to make it the American thing to do (at least what people do where AngellicHuntress lives) but there was a kiss involved just the same!

Helen moved back and bit her lip. Was she crazy? Draco would be disgusted at what she just did! Obviously she was wrong. At least he wasn't saying anything bad...actually he wasn't saying anything at all so she excused herself and went to go have a little talk with Kevin.

She found Kevin sleeping on the couch in the deserted common room. She smiled and sat down on the edge and absently stroked his well defined jaw and smoothed back the hair from his face. He blinked a few times and then suddenly enveloped her in his arms.

"You're back!"

Then he let go of her quickly.

"Did I hurt you?"

"No, no, I'm fine!" she said quickly. "Honest."

He sighed with relief.

"Good."

"Bianca visited me in Mungo's before going back to Salem." Helen said.

"What did she say?"

"Well she wanted me to go with her."

"What did you say?"

"I'm staying at Hogwarts."

"You are?" Kevin said in surprise.

"Yup. I go where I'm needed and not to sound conceited but Hogwarts is the place."

"What did Mrs. Baker have to say about it?"

"Well actually...you'd think she'd be even firmer on insisting I go back but she's actually supporting me. She realizes that when Voldemort wants something done...it'll be done. No matter where."

"Absolutely right."

"Hey Kevin...." Helen started. Kevin knew what that voice meant.

"Cho."

"Did you really break up with her?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"It came down to a decision between you and her. Naturally I chose you."

"Naturally?"

Kevin reached out for her hand.

"Helen...you know it and I know it...we've gone through an odd and rough patch this year...but I never stopped having feelings for you and I know you're thinking the exact same thing."

"Kevin...summer will be our last time together. I've got another year here and then three more years in Auror school."

"I've got Healing school."

"Aurors work a lot."

"You get long vacations."

"Kevin..."

"Helen..."

She stared into his eyes and felt all her worries melting away. This was Kevin. In first year he'd been the one who'd finally gotten her to open up. In second year he defended her in front of the entire school. Third year he'd thrown her a surprise birthday party and even gotten around to inviting Alby. Fourth year he'd shielded her from a bludger

that had had the Dapplebeater Defense used on it. In fifth year he'd taken a knife that had been aimed for her. That year he'd tried to save her from her kidnappers at Salem, got stunned, broke up with his girlfriend, cut his arm to get blood to lure the thestrals to them, and went to Nott's house to try and rescue her. He'd stuck by her through good times and bad. If they were meant to be together they would be no matter what odds were against them.

"We belong together." he whispered. The only thing Helen could do was nod. She'd begun to fall back into the 'Kevin is always right because his beautiful misty blue eyes don't lie' phase.

"It'll just take some time."

*A/n: He cupped her face in his hands...and for the sake of the beauty of it...I won't say what happened next, except that they shared a pure, perfect, and blissful moment.

No it wasn't sex. Lol.

Chapter 22: Begin and End

Helen had to admit...all the bad things that happened at Hogwarts had been worth it for all the good things that also happened there. Hogwarts had this odd aura about it that made you miss being away from it. She'd said goodbye to her friends (she did not go with them on the Hogwarts Express) and stayed with Dumbledore for a week. One more week was spent at Mrs. Baker's house. Then she finally went home and thought about things. What new devilry would be in store for her next? What new blessings would be bestowed upon her? Would Harry and Hermione get together? Would Ron find someone? Would Draco ever be happy? Could she and Kevin last? She wasn't sure but whatever happened in the future...she could handle it. With her friends at her side...nothing could stand in her way.